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THE PREACHING OF PETER THE HERMIT.

THE
CRUSADES
AND
THE CRUSADERS
OR,

Stories of the Struggle for the Holy Sepulchre.

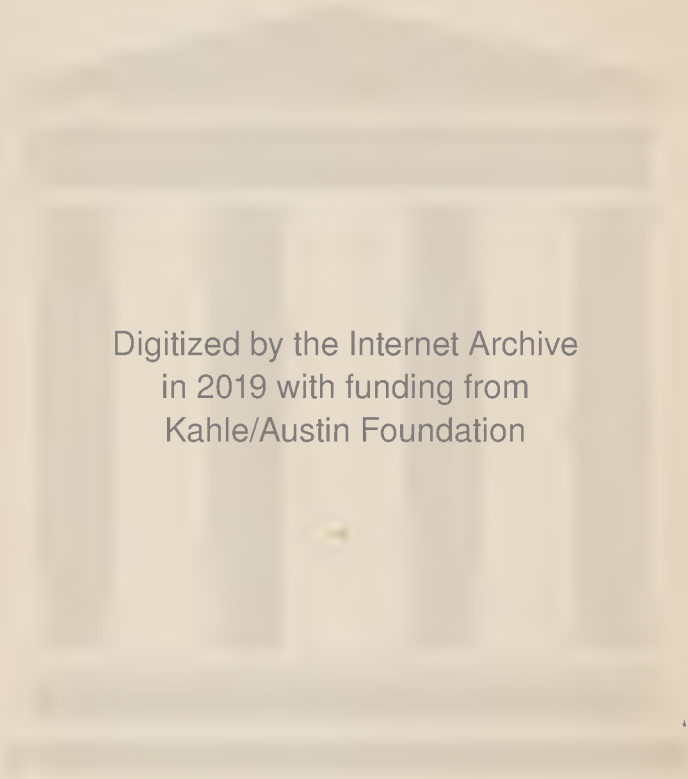
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“BOYHOOD OF GREAT MEN,” “WARS OF THE ROSES,” ETC.

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PREFACE.

THE piety and chivalry exhibited by those Christian warriors, who, at an early period of European civilisation, left their homes and their countries to rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the grasp of Moslem conquerors, have since seldom—save in the case of men too sceptical to sympathise, or too stupid to comprehend—failed to excite admiration and curiosity. My object, in this book for boys, is to give an idea of the heroes who, animated by religion and heroism, took part in the battles, the sieges, the marvellous enterprises of valour and despair, which make up the history of those great adventures known as the Crusades.

I have endeavoured, I would fain hope not without some slight degree of success, to narrate the events of the Holy War, from the time Peter the Hermit rode over Europe on his mule, rousing the religious zeal of the nation, to that dismal day when Acre, the last stronghold of the Christians in the East, fell before

PREFACE.

the arms of the successor of Saladin and of Bibars Bendocdar. During the two centuries that intervened, many of the greatest personages of Europe stitched the red cross on their shoulder, and signalised their prowess against the enemies of their religion. To that period we can, in a national point of view, look back with pride; for, while Germans can point to Frederick Barbarossa, and Frenchmen to Godfrey of Bouillon, Philip Augustus, and St. Louis, as prominent in "the world's debate," Englishmen can discern among the armed throng, far away indeed but still distinct in the distance, Richard Cœur de Lion, "the feudal king *par excellence*;" William Longsword, the flower of Anglo-Norman nobles; and our First Edward, the greatest of those mighty monarchs, strong in battle and wise in council, who for more than three hundred years were the pride of England and the terror of England's foes.

I believe that the examples of the great men, whose gallant deeds are depicted in the following pages, are calculated to exercise a wholesome influence on the minds of youthful readers; and I trust that the work will not be deemed inappropriate to those for whose perusal it is more particularly intended.

J. G. E.

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THE CRUSADES AND THE CRUSADERS.

BOOK FIRST.

RESCUE OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

CHAPTER I.

PETER THE HERMIT.

ABOUT the middle of the eleventh century, feudalism was rampant. That great system, having rescued Europe from chaos and anarchy, was rapidly attaining its complete development. Feudal laws decided claims; feudal customs regulated society; feudal castles, defended by rampart and moat, crowned every height; and feudal magnates, wearing chain mail, bestriding mettled steeds, and attended by mounted spearmen, rode about imposing awe alike on mitred priests and crowned kings, on peasants occupied with tillage and burghers engaged in trade.

At that period, when feudal chiefs exercised an influence which enabled them to defy kings and oppress people, Eustace, Count of Bouillon, was one of the great nobles of Europe. From his ancestors, Eustace inherited power and authority; and by marriage with the heiress of Lorraine, he greatly added to his wealth and importance. The designation of Count, as understood in modern days, of course conveys no idea of the grandeur of such a man. The Count of almost every French province maintained a state which threw royalty into the shade. When at peace, his board was surrounded by seneschals, cupbearers, and pages, falconers and minstrels. When at war, his banner was attended by knights, squires, and grooms, vavasours and varlets.

Among those who fed at the board and rode under the banner of the Count of Bouillon, was a young man who could hardly have failed to attract notice. He was a native of Amiens; and his name was Peter. Some said he was of patrician origin; but nature had denied him noble features and a noble presence. In truth, his face was plain even to ugliness, and his stature was so short, that contemporaries called him "little Peter." But he was gifted with a quick intellect and wondrous eloquence. When he spoke, his eye brightened with the fire of genius; and his enthusiasm was such that he carried away the feelings of listeners in spite of their judgment.

At the opening of his career, Peter, in pursuit of

happiness, determined on a dash at matrimony, and wedded a lady of the family of Roussy. The marriage, however, would seem to have been contracted without any excessive degree of prudence. The bride was old and apparently as unattractive as the bridegroom was eccentric; and domestic feuds were doubtless the consequence. In any case, Peter, growing weary of his plain spouse's company, began to look wistfully toward those religious houses, situated in pleasant places and shaded by stately trees, where holy men, dedicated to God's service, kept alive the flame of ancient learning, and dispensed befitting charities to the indigent and poor. Ere long, he found himself a widower, gave way to his restless mood, threw aside his steel cap and coat of mail, and broke the ties that bound him to a world with which he could not sympathise.

But Peter had been born with a spirit which, until satisfied with some mighty achievement, could not know repose. His brain was quite as restless under the monk's hood, as it had been under the warrior's basnet. Every day his existence was troubled with regrets. The errors of youth and the absurdities of manhood remained in his memory, and perpetually presented themselves to his mind's eye in their worst colours. Having sought, without finding, rest in the cloister, Peter tired of monastic as he had tired of military life; and assuming the garb of an anchorite, he passed his days and nights in meditation, fasting, and prayer. Whenever seen by accident, he appeared

in the weeds of "a solitary," and soon became known as "the Hermit."

Notwithstanding mortifications of the body, Peter's soul remained unsatisfied. Penance and devotional exercises were of no avail in dispelling restlessness of spirit. Memory brought back the past; and imagination conjured up a future. In his silent cell he still felt a craving for excitement; and as enthusiasm, favoured by solitude, elevated his soul above facts and circumstances, he surrounded himself with visions, which convinced him that he was designed by Heaven to accomplish something great.

While Peter, in his solitary cell, thus gave way to enthusiasm, Christians every year assumed "the scallop shell and sandal shoon," and made pilgrimages to the East. An especial virtue was supposed to attach to the Holy Land; and persons of all ranks, with an idea of atoning for their sins, were in the habit of repairing to pray at the Holy Sepulchre. Even in this life, a man derived advantages from having made the pilgrimage; and his departure and return were celebrated with religious ceremonies. Ere setting forth, he was presented by priests with a staff, a serip, and a gown, marked with the cross, sprinkled with holy water, and ceremoniously accompanied to the boundaries of his parish. If the pilgrim returned, he was regarded with a mysterious veneration; and, after presenting a palm branch to the priest to be deposited on the altar, he acquired the reputation of extraordinary

sanctity, and the privileges which accompany such a reputation.

About the year 1094, Peter the Hermit resolved upon an expedition to Jerusalem. With a brain on fire, and in a mood the reverse of serene, he prepared to fulfil his pious purpose ; and set out from his native town. Princes, peers, and prelates had trodden the path he pursued. They, however, had died by the way, or returned merely to boast of having seen the Holy City. Peter, as he left Amiens, with no defence but the sign of the cross, and no guide but his sanguine spirit, and journeyed from place to place, faring as he best could, and causing surprise by his excited manner and eccentric gestures, probably indulged in anticipations of far different results from his adventure. Men, who granted him hospitality and asked his prayers in requital, little dreamt what great idea was occupying his mind and agitating his frame. They would have wondered, had they been told what influence the odd-looking pilgrim was to have on the destinies of Europe and of Asia.

CHAPTER II.

PILGRIMAGES TO PALESTINE.

WHEN Peter the Hermit assumed the scrip and staff at Amiens, and travelled eastward on his way to Jerusalem, Christians had for centuries been in the habit of making pilgrimages to Palestine.

It was while Constantine the Great wore the imperial purple, and ere yet the seat of empire had been removed from Rome to Constantinople, that Christians began to manifest interest in the Holy City. Destroyed by the Romans under Titus, and rebuilt by the Romans under Adrian, Jerusalem enlisted the pious sympathies of Helena, widow of Constantius Chlorus ; and, in 326, the Empress, then in her eightieth year, undertook a pilgrimage to the places which had witnessed the birth and crucifixion of the Redeemer of mankind, and rendered her visit memorable by founding the church of the Nativity at Bethlehem. Influenced by his mother's example, Constantine built a magnificent church on the site of the Holy Sepulchre, made explorations, which resulted in the discovery of the true cross ; and so smoothed the way, that Christians, freed from

fear of persecution, and secure under protection of the Roman eagles, resorted eagerly to Palestine.

The privileges, however, which the pilgrims enjoyed proved temporary. Julian, the nephew of Constantine, on succeeding to the imperial throne, and abjuring the Christian faith, treated its professors as visionaries, and even attempted to weaken the authority of prophecies by rebuilding the temple. This operation, entrusted to Jews, was commenced with vigour. But the death of the apostate Emperor put a stop to the work ; and Christians, thanking God for having confounded the designs of the Heathen, continued their pilgrimages with renewed ardour.

No sooner had the warlike nations of the West been converted from the worship of Thor and Odin to a knowledge of the truth, than they became eager to visit those places where their Redeemer had taught and suffered, made the blind to see and the lame to walk, restored life to the dead and given hope to the living. The roads to Zion were crowded with pilgrims, eager to worship at the Sepulchre ; Jerusalem became the seat of a patriarch ; new and splendid churches were erected ; monasteries sprung up on the banks of rivers and on the sides of mountains ; and thousands of Europeans remained in Palestine to devote their lives to works of beneficence and charity.

But evil days were at hand. At the beginning of the seventh century, while Heraclius occupied the throne of Constantinople, the Persians, who had long

been formidable foes of the Empire, penetrated to Palestine, and under their king Cosroes, took the Holy City by storm, and destroyed the church of the Holy Sepulchre. After shedding much blood, and doing much mischief, they withdrew, carrying with them the true cross, the patriarch, and many of the principal inhabitants. After ten years of mourning and woe, however, the scene changed, and Heraclius, triumphing over his Pagan foes, brought back the surviving captives. Deeming the true cross by far the most glorious of his trophies, the Emperor entered the city walking barefoot, and carrying the sacred relic on his shoulders.

Heraclius now prepared to repair the sacred edifices, which the Persians had profaned and damaged. Everything, indeed, seemed prosperous, and Christians congratulated each other on their troubles being at an end. But at this period the East was astonished by the rise of the Saracens, a new race, destined, as conquerors, to display a degree of energy which enabled them to influence, in a remarkable manner, the fortunes of the world.

It was at the close of the seventh decade of the sixth century, while the heirs of Adolphe the Goth were flourishing in Spain, and the heirs of Clovis were cutting each other's throats in France, that Mahomet drew his first breath in the city of Mecca. Nothing in his birth or boyhood indicated the influence he was destined to exercise. From his earliest youth, how-

ever, he indulged in religious meditations, and ere long conceived the idea of feigning a mission and founding a faith. Every year, with this view, Mahomet retired to a cave, and, pretending to conferences with the angel Gabriel, he at length produced the Koran, and declared that there was only one God, and that Mahomet was the prophet of God.

The imposture was not perpetrated without inconvenience. Mecca became the scene of popular tumult, and the pretended prophet, at the age of fifty-three, fled to Medina. Mahomet, however, did not despair; and joined by Omar, a valiant soldier, he proceeded to propagate his doctrines, subdued all Arabia, and took several cities of Syria.

At the age of sixty-three Mahomet expired in the midst of his successes. But the warriors who had followed his fortunes prosecuted his conquests, and Omar, elected to the caliphate, after seizing Egypt and the whole of Persia, wrenched Syria from the Empire of Constantinople. At an early period of their victorious career, the Saracens advanced some mysterious claim to Jerusalem; and, in 636, they appeared in hostile array before the walls. "Let us," they said, approaching the city, "enter into the holy place which God has promised."

After sustaining a siege of four months' duration, the Christians agreed to surrender; and Omar, entering Jerusalem in his garment of camel's wool, ordered the mosque bearing his name to be erected on the site

of the Temple. It appears, however, that the austere Caliph exhibited forbearance, and left the vanquished liberty to exercise their religion. But Christians, prevented from ringing their bells and displaying their crosses, were perpetually reminded of lost privileges, and the Patriarch, yielding to grief, sickened and died. "Alas ! alas !" exclaimed the godly man, "the abomination of desolation is in the holy place !"

The presence of Moslem rulers in Syria and Palestine did not prevent pilgrimages to the Holy Sepulchre. Indeed, when the heirs of Omar ceased to reign as caliphs, and the Abassides, Mahomet's male heirs, established their throne at Bagdad, Christians found their position at Jerusalem far from intolerable. Haroun Alraschid, the great caliph of his dynasty, prompted by respect for the name of Charlemagne, regarded them with favour, and treated them with kindness. All pilgrims to the Holy City, without danger, found entertainment in an hospital, composed of twelve hosteleries, and surrounded by gardens and vineyards, in the vale of Jehoshaphat ; and many found a last resting-place in a cemetery, shaded with trees and dotted with cells, near the fountain of Shiloe.

Under protection of the black banner of the Abasside caliphs, Christians for a time prayed in peace and worshipped in security. But, about the middle of the tenth century, events occurred to blast their hopes and destroy their comfort. The Abasside dynasty no longer produced men capable of dealing with countless diffi-

culties; and the Fatamites, claiming the caliphate as heirs of Ali, Mahomet's son-in-law, fixed their throne at Cairo, and projected the conquest of Syria.

This crisis roused the Emperor of Constantinople, and an effort was made to save the Christians from impending danger. At first fortune smiled on the enterprise; but the death of the Greek Emperor soon rendered it hopeless. Jerusalem surrendered in 960, and the black banner of the Abassides was displaced by the green flag of the Fatimites.

For a time, the Caliphs of Cairo treated the Christians with some degree of favour; indeed they felt anxious to enrich their dominions, so long desolated by war, and encouraged pilgrimages for the sake of the gold and silver received in exchange for relics and consecrated trinkets. During the first five decades of the eleventh century, saints and sinners flocked from the West to Jerusalem. A belief prevailed in Europe that the "second coming of Christ" was at hand; and the attractions of the Holy City became more irresistible than ever. People of all ranks, in hopes of atoning for their sins, rushed to the East; and a Duke of Normandy, the father of William the Conqueror, and a Count of Anjou, the ancestor of the Plantagenets, appeared among those who assumed the garb of pilgrims. The Caliphs, glad of such an opportunity to replenish the treasury, demanded a piece of gold from every one who entered the gates of Jerusalem; and, as most of the Christians left home with nothing but their

scrip and staff, the exaction of this tribute proved most cruel.

But whatever their trials under the government of the Fatimites, Christians, ere long, found themselves in the power of masters still less merciful. While the luxury of Bagdad and Cairo was debilitating the descendants of men who had followed the banner of Mahomet and Omar, from the deserts beyond the Oxus came bands of fierce horsemen, with woollen caps and wooden stirrups, to continue the struggle of Moslem against Christian. These Turks, after seizing the Empire of Persia, embraced the Mahometan faith, allied themselves with the Caliph of Bagdad, attacked the possessions of the Fatimites, and speedily restored the banners of the Abassides to the walls of the cities of Syria.

Jerusalem naturally excited the ambition of this new band of Moslem warriors; and, in 1065, the Holy City yielded to their impetuous assault. Entering where Roman, and Persian, and Arabian had come before them, the Turks slaughtered and devastated without the slightest distinction. Mosques and churches were given up to pillage, and the blood of Christian and Egyptian flowed in the same stream.

While one army of Moslems wrested Jerusalem from the Fatimites, another, having captured Edessa and Antioch, proceeded to wrest Nice from the Greeks. Dominant in Asia Minor, a Turk named Soliman erected his throne at Nice; and in that city, fifty miles

from the capital of the Empire of the East, the Mos-
em warriors, occupying, as it were, an advanced post,
awaited a favourable opportunity to cross the Bos-
phorus, possess themselves of Constantinople, and pre-
cipitate themselves on Christendom.

With ferocious foes in Jerusalem, and ferocious
foes in Asia Minor, Christians in the East found their
plight deplorable. Those who resided in the Holy
City were exposed to cruel persecutions. Those who
made pilgrimages from Europe to the Holy Sepulchre
were exposed to extreme peril. When Peter the
Hermit turned his thoughts towards Palestine, matters
had come to the worst. Christians were beaten with
rods, loaded with chains, sold as slaves, and harnessed
like oxen. Never had they felt so much misery, never
had they entertained so little hope, as when Peter
took the cross at Amiens, and turned his steps east-
ward to worship at the Holy Sepulchre.

CHAPTER III.

HERMIT, PATRIARCH, AND POPE.

ONE day, in the year 1094, when the conquest of England by the Normans had inspired feudal warriors with a desire for adventurous expeditions, a little man, mounted on a mule, might have been observed to ascend the heights of Emmaus, and come in sight of Jerusalem. The appearance of the rider was most eccentric; indeed, the woollen mantle gathered round his person, the thick cord that girded his waist, the monk's hood thrown over his head, and the sandals on his feet, formed a costume so grotesque as to attract notice wherever he appeared. But the rider, being Peter the Hermit, was probably in no mood to notice criticism; for his soul must have glowed with ardour as he ambled onwards to the Holy City.

Jerusalem could no longer have been described as the most glorious city of the East. All the grandeur by which she was distinguished, when peace was within her walls and prosperity within her palaces, had departed. Formed of mosques, and churches, and square houses, surmounted by flat terraces, situated on four hills, encircled by a strong wall, which undulated with

the uneven ground, and surrounded by sterile plains and barren mountains, where a few thorns and olives struggled into growth, and where a solitary palm tree, here and there, stood erect, the city presented an aspect suggestive of mournful reflections. But the eye of such a man as the Hermit met everywhere with objects to excite his religious enthusiasm. His fervour was roused to the highest pitch when he gazed with entranced eye on Zion and Olivet, and on Moriah, where the site of the Temple was occupied by Omar's mosque, and on Calvary, where the church of the Resurrection stood as a monument of Constantine's piety.

At Jerusalem Peter took up his residence under the roof of a Latin Christian, and soon drew his host into interesting conversation. The recital of all the woes endured by Christians in the Holy City made the Hermit's blood boil. While listening to an account of the oppressions and indignities of which they were the victims, he glowed with indignation, and occupied himself perpetually with meditating schemes for their relief.

At length, one day, when the Hermit had, with a crowd of pilgrims, ascended Mount Calvary, and prostrated himself at the Holy Sepulchre, a celestial voice seemed to sound in his ear. "Peter," it said, "arise! Hasten to proclaim the tribulation of my people. For it is time that my servants should be aided, and that the holy places should be freed!" The enthusiast,

after listening to these words, entertained no doubt that he was designed by Heaven to deliver Jerusalem. Rising from the ground, he repaired to the house of the Patriarch.

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which had been created in 457, was not, in 1094, a dignity which the worldly or luxurious were likely to covet. Indeed, it seems to have brought little with it but persecution and peril. Simeon, who now held the office, was a man advanced in life, with white hair and a most venerable figure. But neither his white head nor his venerable figure availed to save him from injury and insult. He bewailed the condition of the Holy City, and wept over the woes of the faithful.

“But can no remedy be devised?” asked Peter, after the Patriarch had bewailed the unhappy plight of his people; “can no termination to such calamities be expected?”

“Most faithful of Christians,” answered Simeon, “it is plain that our sins have shut us out from the mercy of God, and that no power on earth can assist us.”

“Yes,” cried Peter, with glistening eye, “there is a power. The warriors of the West will ere long set Jerusalem free.”

“Doubtless,” said the Patriarch, with pious resignation, “when the measure of our afflictions shall be full, God may touch the hearts of princes, and send them to our succour.”

“If the people of Europe had evidence of your miseries,” said Peter, excitedly, “they would come to the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre. Write, therefore, to the Pope, and to the Latin Christians, and affix your seal to the epistle. I will, as a penance for my sins, travel through the West, and urge them to save you from longer degradation.”

After this conversation, the Patriarch and the Hermit shed tears of joy at the idea of deliverance. Though probably not quite so sanguine as his coadjutor, Simeon addressed letters to the Pope; and Peter, having promised to rouse Christendom to arms, left Jerusalem to return to Europe.

Having made his way to Rome, Peter craved an audience of the Pope. A native of France, with the title of Urban the Second, then figured as vicar of Christ. The idea of a war for the deliverance of Jerusalem was neither new nor unpleasing to this personage; for the great Hildebrand had thought of such an expedition as likely to contribute to the Papal power; and Urban, a disciple of Hildebrand, was not blind to its advantages. On being admitted to Urban's presence, therefore, Peter had the gratification of finding that his project was regarded with favour. In every respect the interview between the Hermit and the Pope appears to have been most satisfactory. Urban, treating Peter as a prophet, commissioned him to rouse the warriors of Europe; and the Hermit, mounting his mule, fared forth to preach a holy war

and promise Heaven to all who should take part in the enterprise.

Never was enthusiast more successful in convincing mankind of the grandeur of his idea. Crossing the Alps, and penetrating into France, Peter electrified castle and city, town and hamlet, with his eloquence. All France was soon in a blaze, and Frank lord and Gaulish slave manifested equal ardour. Sometimes he preached in a church, sometimes at the market-cross, and sometimes under a tree by the wayside. But wherever he appeared, people revered him as a saint, crowded around him, followed his footsteps, and deemed themselves happy if they could touch the hem of his mantle, or pluck a hair from the mane of his mule. Ere long his fame crossed the Channel, and the minds of victor Norman and vanquished Saxon were alike fired with zeal. All hailed the Hermit as "the man of God," and expressed their eagerness to be led against the enemies of their religion.

While Peter was riding over Europe and preaching a holy war, the Pope did not neglect the grand project to which he had given his countenance. At this very time, when Peter was rousing Christendom to arm for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre, ambassadors reached Rome to intimate the danger which existed of Constantinople falling into the hands of the Moslem. In fact the Greeks no longer possessed the courage to fight their own battles, and the Emperor Alexis Comnenus appealed for aid to the Pope and the Princes of

Europe. To the Pope, Alexis pointed out the danger to which Christianity would be exposed, in the event of infidels capturing Constantinople ; to the Princes of the West, he promised treasures as the reward of their services, and hinted that the love of the Greek women, whose charms he described in glowing terms, would repay their country's champions.

After seriously musing over the project of Peter, and considering the message of Alexis, Urban convoked a council at Placentia ; and there, at the Pope's summons, hundreds of prelates, thousands of ecclesiastics, and tens of thousands of laymen assembled. The gathering was so numerous, that the council was held in a plain outside the city ; and after the ambassadors of Alexis had implored the aid of the warriors of the West, Urban pointed out the duty and the necessity of saving Constantinople and Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the council, after occupying days with other matters, separated without coming to any decision as to a holy war.

No sooner, however, did the Council of Placentia break up, than Urban convoked a Council at Clermont. At that place three hundred bishops and a multitude of princes and nobles presented themselves. It was winter, the season was severe, and the ground was covered with snow. Nevertheless the Pope, braving cold and fatigue, crossed the Alps to preside, and found Clermont like a vast camp. The city was crowded with princes, prelates, and ambassadors ; every town

and village in the neighbourhood was thronged ; and cold as was the season, multitudes were lodged beneath pavilions and tents in the meadows and the fields.

For several days the Council of Clermont was occupied with questions in which few of those assembled took interest ; and the majority, who thought of nothing but an expedition to Palestine, manifested impatience. At length, on the tenth day, the Council held a sitting in the great square of the city ; and the Pope, accompanied by Peter the Hermit, and attended by cardinals, ascended a throne, and described in pathetic language the desolation of the Holy Places.

“ Christian warriors,” said Urban, addressing the assembled multitude, “ rejoice : for you, who without ceasing seek vain pretexts for war, have to-day found true ones. You are not now called to avenge the injuries of men, but injuries offered to God ; and it is not now a town or castle that will reward your valour, but the wealth of Asia, and a land flowing with milk and honey. If you triumph over your foes, the kingdoms of the East will be your heritage. If you are conquered, you will have the glory of dying where Christ died. This is the time to prove that you are animated by a true courage, and to expiate so many violences committed in the bosom of peace. When Christ summons you to his defence, let no base affections detain you at home—listen to nothing but the groans of Jerusalem, and remember that the Lord has

said—‘He that will not take up his cross and follow me, is unworthy of me.’ ”

The speech of the Pope was at first listened to in solemn silence. Gradually, however, as he proceeded, sobs broke from the crowd. Noticing this, and skilfully picturing the insolence of the enemies of Christ, Urban asked the warriors of the West to drive out the handmaid and her children, and significantly reminded them that if the infidels were not encountered in Asia, they would yet accomplish the conquest of Europe.

“Gird your swords to your thighs, ye men of might,” exclaimed the Pontiff in conclusion; “it is our part to pray, and it is yours to fight—ours (with Moses) to hold up unwearied hands; yours to stretch forth the sword against the children of Amalek.”

“God wills it! It is the will of God!” cried the assembled Christians, rising in a mass as Urban paused.

“Yes,” added the Pope, “without doubt it is the will of God! Go, then, brave warriors of the Cross, and let the shout of ‘God wills it!’ be your war-ery in the holy enterprise.”

Immediately after this scene had been enacted, Urban, by a gesture, intimated his wish for silence; and while the crowd bent their knees, one of the cardinals pronounced a form of confession. Adhemar, Bishop of Puÿ, then stepping forward, asked to be allowed to enter into “the way of God,” and received

from the Pope one of the red crosses which had been consecrated for the ceremony. Many knights and barons, following the bishop's example, received the sacred badge, and swore to avenge the cause of Christ. All who took the oath, stitched the red cross of silk or cloth on the right shoulder of the mantle. After this they were termed "bearers of the cross," and the holy war, on which they had vowed to enter, was called a Crusade.

This ceremony over, the Pope promised to all who assumed the cross, entire remission of sins; and the Crusaders appointed a rendezvous for the following spring. The Council of Clermont was then dissolved; and while the knights and barons separated to prepare for their expedition, the Pope went on his way rejoicing in the prospect of uniting the nations of Christendom against the enemies of Christ.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PILGRIM PRINCES.

AFTER having dissolved the Council of Clermont, Urban the Second travelled through France to preach the crusade and describe the miseries of the Christians in the East. Wherever the Pope went, men of all ranks listened with sympathy; and, far and wide, spread rumours of the war about to be undertaken for the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre. Almost every country of Europe was agitated; and in France, where the excitement was most felt, warriors of pride and nobility borrowed money and enlisted men to take part in the expedition. Among the chiefs, Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, a man of piety, learning, and courage, was most eminent.

Godfrey of Bouillon was son of that old Count, in whose household Peter the Hermit commenced life; and from his mother, in whose veins flowed Carlovin-gian blood, he inherited the dukedom of Lorraine. Few men in Europe appeared to occupy a position more enviable than Godfrey. His name was stainless, his

reputation high, his influence great, his property vast, and none of his castles without the means of rendering feudal life pleasant. But all these advantages failed to insure happiness; for memory was perpetually recalling scenes in which he had figured conspicuously, and in which he had played a part of which his conscience could no longer approve.

It appears that Godfrey, born in the castle of Baysy, and trained from youth at the German court, was early engaged in that memorable struggle between the Pope and the Emperor, which is known in history as "The War of Investiture." While fighting in that war for Henry the Fourth against Hildebrand, Godfrey won high renown. It was he who, in the bloody battle on the banks of the Elster, struck down, with his own hand, Rodolph of Swabia, whom Hildebrand had gifted with the crown of Germany; and it was he who, at the siege of Rome, on that day when Henry's banners appeared before the Eternal City, and when Hildebrand took refuge in the Castle of St. Angelo, first forced his way through the walls, and opened the gate to the Imperial troops. He had since reflected with remorse on the part he had taken against the head of the church; and he now eagerly assumed the cross, in hopes of expiating exploits which he could not recall without sadness.

No sacrifices appeared to Godfrey too great to entitle him to pardon for what he deemed the sin of having fought against the vicar of Christ. Not only

did he with that object exhibit willingness to leave his home ; but before doing so he deprived himself of every temptation to return. He alienated his castles and domains, sold his cities and principalities, and disposed of all right in his duchy. With the money thus obtained he arrayed a magnificent army ; and marched eastward at the head of ten thousand horse and eighty thousand foot. Godfrey's brother Eustace, Count of Bouillon, his brother Baldwin, and his kinsman Baldwin du Bourg, accompanied him, and many knights and nobles of the province joined his standard.

At the time when Godfrey was mustering his forces, other chiefs were preparing to share his peril and his glory. Hugh, Count of Vermandois, brother of the King of France ; Robert, Count of Flanders ; Stephen, Count of Blois ; and Count Robert of Paris, were among the distinguished.

But no crusader displayed more promptness than Raymond, Count of Thoulouse, under whose banner gathered the men of the south of France. Raymond was a warrior of age and experience, who had fought against the Saracens in Spain at the right hand of the Cid, and wedded the daughter of the great Alphonso. But age had not diminished his ardour, and he roused himself to take part in the enterprise. " In my youth," he said, " I fought the Saracens in Europe ; and, in my old age, I will go and fight them in Asia." The Bishop of Puy, who after the Council of Clermont had been named papal legate, accompanied Raymond of

Thoulouse, and a hundred thousand mēn of Gascony and Provence followed the old Count's standard.

While Godfrey of Bouillon, Raymond of Thoulouse, Robert of Flanders, and Hugh of Vermandois, were taking the cross, fame carried tidings of the crusade to two princes, who resided at the Castle of Rouen. They were bosom friends, though utterly unlike, physically and mentally. One was short of stature, fat to excess, volatile, adventurous, and ever aspiring to something which he could not attain. The other was tall, handsome, fair to behold, slow, unready, and much too inert even to claim a crown which was his by hereditary right and popular election. Both had reached the age of forty, displayed high courage, and borne much adversity. One was Robert Curthose, eldest son of William the Conqueror; the other was Edgar Atheling, heir of the Anglo-Saxon kings.

Excluded by his younger brother, William Rufus, from the English throne, the situation of Curthose was not enviable. It is true he was Duke of Normandy and lord of numerous castles. But he was so improvident in regard to pecuniary matters, that he found himself continually in difficulties. Women and parasites, jesters and mountebanks, preyed without mercy on his substance, and he was sometimes reduced to ludicrous distress. Indeed the chronicler states that he was frequently prevented from leaving his bed and being present at mass for want of decent clothes.

While affairs in the castle of Rouen were in this

unhappy state, and when the crusade became the fashion, the imagination of Curthose was immediately inflamed by the idea. Perhaps of all people in Europe, he had least temptation to stay at home. The prospect of escaping from the avarice of usurers and the insolence of duns, must under the circumstances have been too tempting to be resisted; and Curthose, resolving to take part in the expedition, looked around for money to defray the expenses.

Fortune proved rather propitious than otherwise. Less difficulty was experienced in obtaining the means than might have been anticipated. William Rufus, in fact, was glad to hear of his brother's intention of leaving Europe, and willing, on certain conditions, to provide him with funds. A bargain was accordingly struck. Rufus furnished the sum of ten thousand marks, and Curthose gave a mortgage over Normandy for five years.

When Curthose took the cross, Edgar Atheling had long resided at Rouen amusing himself with dogs and horses, and reflecting with philosophic calmness on the crown of which he had been deprived and the country from which he had been banished. He had now passed the age of forty, and suppressed every personal ambition. But, infected by the prevailing enthusiasm, he resolved to take part in the expedition to Jerusalem, and associate the history of the House of Cerdic with the history of the Holy War.

At this period, however, a Scottish prince, named

Donald Bane, happened to have usurped the throne of Atheling's nephew; and the heir of Cerdic exhibited, in regaining the rights of his sister's son, a degree of energy which he had never displayed when his own interests were at stake. When the crusade was preached, he was just setting out to head an army of Anglo-Saxons and Scoto-Saxons against the usurper. But he engaged to join Curthose in the Holy Land, and to lead against Saracens the army with which he was now going to conquer Scots.

In the meantime, Curthose was nobly attended. When he set up his white banner embroidered with gold, multitudes came readily to fight under a leader so generous and brave. A goodly band of warriors, led by feudal barons, sprung up in Normandy; and Stephen, Earl of Albemarle, and Everard Perey, Aubrey De Vere, Earl of Oxford, and Joceline Courtenay, Conan de Montaeute, and Girard de Gourney, were among the Norman barons whom England sent forth to accompany the Conqueror's heir.

The pilgrim princees appointed Constantinople as a rendezvous, and agreed to set out at different dates and to pursue different routes. Indeed so numerous were those who took the cross, that, marching in one army, they would have exhausted the countries through which they had to pass. They therefore commenced their expedition eastward in four divisions, all grandly arrayed. Every warrior wore a casque and a hauberk of chain mail. The infantry carried long shields, the

cavalry round bucklers for their defence, and a goodly supply of swords, lances, poniards, axes, maces, bows, slings, and cross-bows, with which to pursue the work of carnage and destruction.

It would appear, however, that the crusaders had no adequate notion of the dangers and difficulties of the way. Knights and nobles, grooms and squires, were equally unaware of the obstacles to be encountered. Many of the warriors took with them their wives and children, and rode along with bugles at their girdles, hawks on their wrists, and hounds running by their side. They seem to have considered the crusade as a sort of pleasant excursion, and to have anticipated reaching the Holy City, if not without fighting battles, at least without storming fortresses.

CHAPTER V.

THE PEASANT-PILGRIMS.

WHILE the princes who had assumed the cross were pawning their castles and alienating their domains, a multitude, under the influence of an enthusiasm that would brook no delay, insisted on setting forth at once for the Holy Land.

Nor is it wonderful that impatience should have been manifested. It appears that every serf who took the cross, shook off his collar and became a freeman; and the peasant of France must have hailed any opportunity of exchanging a cabin associated in his mind with the cruelty of man, for places associated in his mind with the mercy of God. Religion was to him everything. Princes and nobles had castles, where minstrels and jongleurs ministered to their diversion, where retainers saddled horses and unleashed hounds for their recreation, and where chaplains read romances of chivalry for their amusement. But save the sentiments and hopes which he owed to the church, the peasant had no consolation in his misery; and when told that, by going to a land which the Pope

described as "flowing with milk and honey," he would secure pardon without penance in this world, and happiness without purgatory in the next, he naturally became an enthusiast, with the single idea of accomplishing his pilgrimage.

Moreover, the very name of Palestine exercised a magical influence on the men of the eleventh century. At the mention of the Holy Land, their imaginations conjured up the most picturesque scenery: graceful palms rustling in the air; fig-trees overhanging the paths; gardens with jasmins, pomegranates, golden citrons, mantling vines, and odoriferous flowers; a sandy soil, glowing under a blue sky; oriental women veiled in white and grouped around fountains; long caravans of camels bearing priceless merchandise; Saracenic castles; cities of which the names were recorded in that sacred book, which the poorest knew by picture; Sharon, famous for roses without thorns; Lebanon, celebrated for cedars and vines; and Carmel, with its solitary convent, and its thyme-covered summit, haunted by the wild boar and the eagle. Such were the objects picturesquely described by pilgrims, which touched the imagination and excited the curiosity of our ancestors.

The French people were first in motion. No feeling of prudence, indeed, interfered with their ardour. Leaving their fields and towns, agricultural serfs and petty traders, displayed eagerness to reach the Holy City. Without considering distance or danger,

many of the peasant-pilgrims took their wives and children to share their perils; and if any rational individual interfered with a word of salutary warning, their answer was ready: "He who will not take up his cross and come with me," bawled these enthusiasts, "is not worthy of me."

But while many assumed the cross with the idea of securing eternal salvation, numbers did so from motives the reverse of laudable. Many a thief and cut-throat, whose life had been a defiance of God and man, appeared to take part in this armed pilgrimage; and the most immoral and irreligious characters in Europe, decked their shoulders with a badge symbolising everything pure and holy. Mingled with pious peasants and decent traders, were men who had long defied every law; and, mingling with wives of peasant and trader, were women who had long discarded all modesty.

From the banks of the Maes and the Moselle, and from the provinces of Burgundy and Champagne, the peasant-pilgrims, arrayed in every variety of costume and armed with every variety of weapon, crowded confusedly towards the point of rendezvous. A sight of the camp which they formed, would have daunted the most skilful war-chief. Eighty thousand men of different races, with their wives and daughters, with infants taken from the cradle, and grandsires on the verge of the grave, and a considerable number of sick and dying—such was the multitude that now demanded to

be led to Jerusalem, and raised the shout of "God wills it!"

But the task of leading them was clearly one from which Alexander the Great or Julius Cæsar might have shrunk. A chief, however, was wanted; and the multitude did not hesitate in their choice. With one voice they nominated Peter the Hermit, and defying the difficulties in prospect, the apostle of the crusade accepted the post of general. Ere long, Peter had reason to rue the day when he was rash enough to make himself responsible for the conduct of an undisciplined host.

A leader having been found, the mob was arranged in two divisions. A knight celebrated as Walter the Penniless was appointed to lead the van. Peter, under the delusion that he could control men whom he had persuaded to take up arms, assumed without hesitation the command of the main body.

Every arrangement was soon made; and Walter the Penniless, having on the 8th of March, 1096, begun his march, traversed without annoyance the French territories, and the banks of the Rhine. The Germans, though not yet roused to zeal, were the reverse of hostile to the expedition. Some, indeed, said, "These Frenchmen are fools for their pains;" but others expressed sympathy with the Christian ardour displayed.

On leaving the German territory, however, Walter had to deal with nations from whom little sympathy could be expected. It was necessary, in fact, to cross

a country inhabited by Hungarians and Bulgarians, neither of whom were unlikely to manifest antipathy. Both nations had lately embraced Christianity. But the Hungarians and Bulgarians had none of that zeal which is supposed to animate recent converts, and they appear to have regarded the crusade with indifference and the crusaders with hatred.

The position of Walter was difficult; but the peniless Knight, finding that the Hungarians treated the pilgrims as enemies, exerted himself to prevent retaliation. Success attended his efforts, and his soldiers left the territories of the Hungarians without a blow having been exchanged.

So far the expedition was characterised by order and decency. It happened, however, that the moderation of Walter was not relished; and on entering Bulgaria, the crusaders resolved to set his authority at defiance. Want rendered them desperate, and they broke from restraint. Spreading themselves over the country, they put men to the sword, burned houses, and plundered sheep-folds. No prudential considerations restrained their ferocity.

Such conduct could hardly produce other than disastrous results; and the desperadoes soon found that outrages of the kind were not to be perpetrated with impunity. Now, in fact, began the misfortunes of the crusade. No sooner did rumours of sheep stolen, houses burned, and men killed, spread over the country, than a cry for vengeance rose loud and high. Rushing

to arms, the Bulgarians fell on the soldiers of the cross, and slaughtered them without mercy. Nothing worthy of the name of resistance appears to have been offered. Some of the crusaders sought refuge in a church, and the others fled fast from their assailants. The Bulgarians hastening to the church, burned the sacred edifice and those who had taken refuge within its walls; while Walter gathering in the fugitives, secured them by a hasty and skilful march from the vengeance they had provoked.

After this disaster, Walter pursued his way through the forests of Bulgaria. But famine dogged the steps of his followers. Finding that matters were reaching a dangerous stage, the pilgrim-warrior appeared before Nissa, a city on the river Moravia, and implored the governor, in the name of Christianity, to save the soldiers of the cross from dying of hunger. Touched with pity, the governor of Nissa furnished food and raiment; and the crusaders, passing quickly through Thrace, arrived, after weeks of fatigue, before the gates of Constantinople.

While Walter the Penniless was leading the van of the pilgrim army toward Constantinople, Peter the Hermit was in motion. Enveloped in his woollen mantle, mounted on his mule, and attended by sixty thousand pedestrians, he passed through Germany. Everything went pleasantly enough; for, the evil passions of the mob being still under restraint, the elements of disturbance had not yet made themselves felt. Men

sang psalms ; women gossipped about every novelty that presented itself ; and children, whenever a town or castle came in sight, asked, with curiosity, “ Is this Jerusalem ? ”

But a change was at hand. On reaching Hungary, Peter was informed of the disasters of his vanguard, and betrayed into a threat of vengeance. Even after this, the Hermit might have reasoned himself into calmness ; but unfortunately, on reaching Semlin, he perceived the bodies of several crusaders hanging from the walls. At this sight Peter gave way to frenzy ; and, a craving for vengeance taking possession of his soul, he resolved to attack the city.

The crusaders were both ready and willing. Indeed, by this time, they wanted something new in the way of excitement, and with gladness received the order to take Semlin. Seizing their weapons and sounding their trumpets, they rushed to the assault. No savage valour could resist such enthusiasm ; and the Bulgarians, giving way, fled in terror. Peter would probably have been satisfied with this triumph ; but the fury of the mob, once let loose, could not be restrained. With clamour and threats they pursued the Bulgarians, sword in hand, and never ceased from the slaughter till four thousand men had fallen.

The bodies of the slain, carried by the river to Belgrade, gave the inhabitants of the Bulgarian capital an idea of the carnage, and the crusaders had soon reason to regret their rashness. While they were at

Semlin, and celebrating their victory, an army, assembled by the King of Hungary, suddenly approached the city. Alarm immediately appeared on every face. The crusaders were, in fact, in no condition to encounter a disciplined host; and Peter, not unaware of the hopelessness of trying conclusions, gave orders for departure, passed the Moravia, and gained the Bulgarian territories.

The peasant-pilgrims now found their progress unopposed. Not a Bulgarian was to be seen, cities and villages were alike deserted. This produced serious inconveniences. Neither guides nor provisions were to be obtained; and with no small difficulty Peter and his pedestrians found their way to Nissa.

Nissa was the city where Walter the Penniless had found relief. Such being the case, the inhabitants doubtless considered that from the pauper Knight's friends they were entitled to forbearance. The aspect of Peter's army, however, was not such as to inspire confidence; and the Bulgarians, on viewing the motley multitude from their walls, became somewhat apprehensive. But Nissa was strongly fortified, and the crusaders did not entertain the idea of attacking it rashly.

At first, both parties appeared anxious to avoid giving offence. The pilgrims asked for provisions, with an intimation that they intended to pursue their journey. The Bulgarians supplied the provisions with a desire that they should be freed from the presence of

their guests. Their intercourse, so far, was amicable ; but unluckily, at this point, some of Peter's men imprudently set fire to mills on the river ; and at sight of the flames, the citizens of Nissa, rushing from the ramparts, fell upon the rear of the pilgrim-army, and after killing every one who came in their way, returned with a host of prisoners and wagon-loads of baggage.

The crusaders beheld the retreat of the Bulgarians with shouts of indignation, and Peter turned back to demand satisfaction. The warlike enthusiasm of the Hermit, however, had cooled since he fled before the King of Hungary ; and perhaps he retained sufficient tincture of the soldiery acquired while riding in the ranks of the Count of Bouillon, to know how unfit his undisciplined followers were to encounter men accustomed to war. In any case, he expressed a wish to negotiate, and sent messengers to the Governor of Nissa, demanding restitution of the prisoners and baggage.

Peter's ambassadors proceeded into the city, and had an interview with the Governor. But that functionary ascribed their peaceful demeanour to fear ; and, though appealed to in the name of Christianity, he gave no hope of redress.

" You perceive we have taken the cross," said the ambassadors, " and, as Christians, we appeal to you, holding the same religion."

" Go back to your general," said the Governor

sternly, "and tell him that I can recognise in you nothing but enemies."

When the ambassadors returned to their comrades and reported the Governor's answer, the crusaders loudly expressed their indignation. Every face immediately flushed, and every blade glittered in the sun. In vain Peter remonstrated. The spirit of insubordination was rampant; and, charging the apostle of the crusade with infidelity to the cause, the exasperated mob brandished their weapons, advanced to the city, and attempted to scale the walls. Repulsed by the Bulgarians, they redoubled their efforts, and, in spite of the remonstrances of Peter and his knights, mingled confusedly with their foes. For a time, the struggle was savagely maintained on both sides. But at length the crusaders gave way. Their rout was complete; and women, children, and equipages fell into the hands of their conquerors.

After witnessing the dispersion of his army, Peter retired to a hill near Nissa, where he passed the summer night deploring his defeat and digesting his mortification. In the meantime, however, his trumpets were continually sounded, and gradually thousands of the fugitives returned to his standard. With the wreck of his army, Peter marched through Thrace; and, rendered docile by disaster, his followers pursued their way without exposing themselves to further mishaps.

At length, in rags and poverty, the peasant-pilgrims,

carrying palms in their hands, appeared at Constantinople; and met with a hospitable reception from Alexis Comnenus. The Emperor invited Peter to the palace, extolled his zeal, loaded him with presents, and distributed money and provisions among his followers. At the same time, he recommended Peter to defer the holy war till the arrival of the princes and barons who had assumed the cross.

The Emperor had early reason to repent of his advice. No sooner were the crusaders clothed and fed, than they began to cast their eyes wistfully on the wealth of Constantinople. In vain did Peter exert himself to keep their passions in check. The thieves and outlaws who had joined the crusade, now exercised far more influence than the Hermit. At length they began to plunder the houses and churches in the suburbs; and Alexis, eager to get rid of such visitors, hastened their departure and furnished vessels to convey them across the Bosphorus.

CHAPTER VI.

WALTER THE PENNILESS.

WALTER THE PENNILESS was a gentleman by birth, and a Burgundian by nation. In other days, he had won golden spurs and inherited a fortune. But, whatever had become of the spurs, Walter's property had vanished, and he possessed nothing save his horse, his armour, and a degree of military skill, which, had he been at the head of fighting men, would have made him a formidable warrior. Having on his arrival before Constantinople encamped under the walls, Walter joined Peter the Hermit, crossed the Bosphorus, and exerted his energy to keep the peasant-pilgrims in order.

On reaching Asia, the apostle of the crusade found himself in command of a hundred thousand men; for at Constantinople, besides being joined by Walter, he had been reinforced by large bodics of Germans and Italians. All these were as enthusiastic and refractory as the crusaders from France, and never had men to perform a more difficult duty than had devolved upon the Hermit and the Knight. Their

united efforts failed to preserve anything like discipline ; and while on the plains bordering the gulf of Nicomedia, their camp became the scene of discord and disorder.

At length the crusaders of Germany and the Italian States came to daggers-drawn with those from France about plunder. Not relishing the superiority assumed by the boastful Frenchmen, the Germans and Italians elected a leader, and, leaving the camp, advanced towards Nice. Arriving before a fort, they commenced an assault ; and, entering sword in hand, slaughtered the garrison. Though without means of subsistence or defence, they boldly took possession, and displayed their standard. Their audacity was not, of course, long left unpunished. A Turkish army soon appeared ; and the Germans and Italians, unprepared for resistance, fell victims to their temerity.

When news of this disaster reached the camp of the crusaders, the French, forgetting their feud, vowed to be the avengers of the Germans and Italians, and gave way to extraordinary excitement. Peter had repaired in disgust to Constantinople ; but Walter did all he could to prevent fatal consequences.

“The Germans and Italians are unworthy of the sacrifice you would make,” said the penniless Knight to those who had constituted themselves ringleaders of the mob. “These men have fallen victims to their own imprudence ; and it is our duty to avoid their example.”

"That," cried the ringleaders in chorus, "is the language of a man who lacks courage."

"I tell you," answered Walter, with a gesture of indignation, "that the enterprise you propose promises nothing but ruin. But have your own way. I cannot sanction your folly, but I will share your fate."

"God wills it!" cried the ringleaders, as they rushed from the tent and roused the mob to arms

The man who at this period figured as Sultan of Nice was not one whom the crusaders, if they had been discreet, would have rashly defied. Reared in the midst of civil strife, and accustomed in his youth to adversity, he was dauntless in defeat and calm in victory. His foes named him with respect; and his friends, with pride, surnamed him "The Lion." On this occasion he was under no serious apprehension; for he was aware of the imprudence of the pilgrims, and quite prepared to avail himself of its result.

Little dreaming of the reception with which they were to meet, the crusaders placed themselves in marching order; and Walter the Penniless, groaning in spirit, and leaving the women and children and old men in the camp, led the van towards Nice. For a time he pursued his way without interruption. Suddenly, however, horns and drums heralded an attack; Saracens, with white turbans, green caftans, and long spears, came in sight; and, on reaching a plain at the base of a mountain, the peasant-pilgrims found themselves face to face with countless foes. Walter halted,

formed his men, and did all that a brave and sagacious leader could do under such circumstances ; but his skill was exerted in vain. Surrounded on all sides by superior numbers, and shrinking from the peril they had defied, the crusaders lost heart and energy. At first, indeed, the conflict was fierce, and the carnage fearful. But ere long every hope expired ; and, with Christian blood flowing around him like water, Walter fell in the midst of his foes, transfixed with arrows and covered with wounds.

Nor did the camp where the women and children had been left long escape. While the priests were performing mass, the victorious Turks suddenly appeared ; and the unfortunate women and children were either put to death or carried into captivity. No one, however, escaped to tell the tale of horror.

It was only by accident that Christendom learned the catastrophe that had befallen the wreck of the first army of the cross. A soldier, escaping to Constantinople, carried to Peter the Hermit tidings of the fate of his comrades ; and on the plain where the Sultan of Nice fought with Walter the Penniless, a quantity of human bones, heaped confusedly together, remained a melancholy monument of the carnage of the peasant-pilgrims.

CHAPTER VII.

SATAN'S SOLDIERS IN CHRIST'S LIVERY.

WHEN Walter the Penniless was vainly endeavouring to save the peasant-pilgrims from ruin, a goat and a goose left Germany at the head of many thousand men.

This mob of crusaders, described as "a wicked rout of people, who served the devil under Christ's livery," appears to have been composed of the off-scourings of society. Notorious pads, cut-throats, and malefactors of every description, incapable of leading peaceful lives, and eager to turn their terrible talents to the most profitable account, took the oath to rescue the Holy Sepulchre; and being informed that the fact of bearing the cross would ensure pardon for sins, and concluding that they might, while wearing the sacred badge, commit crimes with impunity, they assembled in great force on the banks of the Rhine.

But unfortunately for these crusaders, everybody knew them to be wolves in sheep's clothing; and no captain would risk his reputation by assuming the functions of leader. In these circumstances, they placed a goat and a goose at their head, and, under

the influence of some gross superstition, ascribed to these animals divine attributes.

Under the auspices of the goat and goose figured a priest named Volkmar, and a count named Emicio, "a tyrant-prince near the Rhine," who having in youth indulged in debauchery, believed he might atone for his sins by devoting middle age to fanaticism. The Priest and the Count, who naturally exercised considerable influence over their comrades, declared that it was impolitic to go in search of Saracens in Asia, till they had dealt with the Jews in Europe; and the mob immediately intimated readiness to commence a general massacre.

The Jews were then odious to Christendom; and it must be confessed that they did much to merit hatred. Their substance was considerable, and their avarice intense. At an early period they had come to Europe, formed a colony at Prague, established themselves as slave-dealers, and by the inhuman traffic acquired immense wealth, which enabled them daily to grind the faces of the poor. Nearly all the gold of Europe had gradually found its way into their hands; and, in the dearth of the circulating medium, they extorted the most exorbitant interest. Of course as usurers they transacted much business, and possessed much power. It was not merely the inmates of castles and monasteries who were their debtors. While the baron pledged his armour and the abbot his plate, the trader pawned his wares, the husbandman his ploughshare,

and the craftsman his tools. All these men were at the mercy of the Jews ; and the mercy of a Jew was generally, in the long-run, found to be infinitely worse than the cruelty of a Christian.

These circumstances would of themselves have rendered the Jew an object of fear and hatred wherever he appeared—with his sensual lip, his hook nose, his peculiar features, his high square yellow cap and his russet gaberdine. But there were other and still stronger reasons for the detestation with which the multitude regarded the Hebrew race. Almost every Jew was understood, openly or secretly, to insult the Christian faith. It was known that one Jew had defaced an image of the Virgin ; that another had crucified a boy in mockery of the Saviour ; and that a third had stabbed the host. At the time of the first crusade, all these things were recalled to memory ; for the Jews were strongly suspected of sympathising with the Saracens ; of showing their sympathy by furnishing arms to carry on war ; of insulting, by their raileries, the enthusiasm then prevailing in Christendom ; and of laughing at the zeal that prompted Christians to “take the staff and sandal, in superstitious penance, and walk afoot to visit the graves of dead men.”

No sooner, therefore, did the Priest and the Count suggest the propriety of attacking the Jews, than the crusaders led by the goat and the goose, spreading themselves through the cities on the Rhine and the

Moselle, killed every Hebrew with whom they met. Neither age nor sex was spared. Helpless women and innocent children perished with their husbands and fathers. Escape appeared impossible; and those Jews who did not at once fall victims gave way to despair. Some shut themselves up in their houses and perished amid the flames; and others, carrying their treasures with them, sought a termination to their miseries beneath the waters of the Rhine.

In the midst of this fearful carnage, the Jews found protection from the ministers of that religion which they were suspected of insulting. Prelate after prelate raised his voice loudly, in the name of humanity, against the outrages that were being perpetrated. Their voices might not, under the circumstances, have been listened to, but their palaces were opened to the afflicted Hebrews; and, under the protection of the crosier, the enemies of Christ found an asylum from the fury of their persecutors.

At length the storm passed over. Satiated with blood, loaded with booty, and elate with pride, the crusaders commenced their march eastward. Terror preceded them wherever they went; and the approach of the goat and goose was sufficient to make people fly from town and hamlet. Without regret for the past, and without apprehension of the future, they moved towards Hungary; and ere long appeared before Altenburg-Owar, a town situated on the Danube, strongly fortified, and defended by marshes.

On reaching Altenburg-Owar, the Priest and the Count demanded a supply of provisions; but the inhabitants, in alarm, closed their gates and declined to comply. Indignant at what they deemed disrespect, the crusaders vowed to treat the Hungarians as they had treated the Hebrews, and prepared to execute their threat. Having cut down a forest, and constructed a causeway which enabled them to reach the walls of the town, they reared ladders against the parapets and commenced the siege. The energy of the citizens, however, was doubled by despair; and, knowing what would be the consequence of surrendering, they made a vigorous defence. The position of the besiegers soon became the reverse of pleasant; for arrows, and darts, and stones, and gallons of boiling oil were uneasingly discharged from the ramparts; and the citizens intimated, in a manner not to be mistaken, their determination to resist to death.

The crusaders, however, were not to be daunted. Shouting and swearing, they pressed the siege and battered the walls. Indeed, at one time, they had every hope of entering Altenburg-Owar in triumph. But suddenly a fearful change occurred. Part of the towers and parapets gave way; the ladders fell with a crash, and thousands of the besiegers were crushed and mangled at the foot of the walls.

Nothing could have been more fortunate for the Hungarians. The noise, the crash, the cries of the

wounded, and groans of the dying, created a panic among the crusaders, and led to their instantly abandoning the siege. At the same time, the Hungarians sallied from the gates, rushed upon their enemies, and put them to the rout. Scarcely a crusader escaped to tell the fate of his comrades. Many fell by the sword; many perished in the marshes; and so many, after being wounded, were drowned in the river, that corpses, in countless numbers, floated over waters red with gore.

While one band of the German pilgrims, whose memory is associated with the goat and the goose, were destroyed by the Hungarians, another band appeared to fill their place. This body, consisting of twenty thousand men, proved hardly less unruly than their countrymen, and astonished the Hungarians by their frightful excesses. Arriving about the end of summer, they gave themselves up to the most brutal debauchery. Outrage after outrage was recklessly perpetrated; and day after day tidings went to the King of Hungary of villages plundered, women violated, and men murdered.

While these Germans were losing all thoughts of the Holy Land, the King of Hungary sent an army to avenge the injuries which his subjects had sustained; and the crusaders learned that enemies were approaching. Rousing themselves from the brutal intemperance in which they had passed weeks, the Germans seized their weapons to resist. But the

leader of the Hungarians, far from exhibiting hostility, presented himself to the Germans in the most amicable manner, declared his anxiety to settle matters quietly, and only requested that they would, to facilitate negotiations, lay down their arms.

No suspicion of foul play appears to have crossed the minds of the crusaders. Perhaps they had been indulging in debauchery to such a degree, that they could hardly have been in full possession of their faculties. In any case, they consented to lay aside their weapons; and scarcely had they done so, when, at a signal from the Hungarian chief, the soldiers sprung into the camp. The Germans, amazed, shed tears, and pointed to the badge on their shoulder. But the chief was deaf to cries for mercy. Every crusader was sent to his account; and the Hungarians rejoiced that their murdered countrymen and violated countrywomen were avenged.

Such was the end of those crusades, undertaken by the populace without placing themselves under chiefs of skill and experience. From this period, we find the armed pilgrims going to the Holy Land under the banner of their natural leaders; men with strong hands, stout hearts, and long heads. No more expeditions were undertaken by multitudes on their own responsibility, or under the mysterious auspices of the goat and the goose.

CHAPTER VIII.

ALEXIS AND THE PILGRIM PRINCES.

WHEN news reached Constantinople, that the warriors of France were marching towards the capital of Greece, on their way to encounter the Saracens, the Emperor Alexis began to repent of having implored their aid, and to apprehend that they might, after the example of other auxiliaries, seize the dominions they had been invoked to save.

Indeed the game which Alexis had to play was somewhat difficult. The empire over which he reigned was corrupt in all its parts; and the crown which he wore was a crown of thorns. Few persons who put on the imperial purple were allowed to wear it long. Since the time of Heraclius, the emperors of the East had fared badly. Some had been assassinated in their own palaces; some, after being deprived of sight, had been sent into exile; and others, after being mutilated, had been consigned to a cloister. Alexis, formerly grand domestic of the empire, had obtained the dignity after incarcerating his benefactor; and

his position was by no means the most enviable. The very first day on which fortune happened to frown, might witness his downfall; for discord reigned in Constantinople; and the Greeks were readier to depose a sovereign than to resist a foe.

Moreover, Alexis had a vague idea what manner of men were the Franks, and especially the Normans, who were now moving eastward. He was aware that they regarded as an enemy every man who possessed anything which they coveted; and he was not unaware that some of them were in the habit of turning their eyes covetously towards a certain rich city on the western shore of the Bosphorus. In the event of the crusaders proving hostile, the Emperor hardly had the means of resistance. The Greeks had long considered cunning more meritorious than courage, and contented themselves with exercising every faculty to deceive. The Emperor's subjects could not fight; the Emperor had no military force but mercenaries, whom his subjects called barbarians; and the idea of matching hireling soldiers with crusaders led by Godfrey of Bouillon, Raymond of Thoulouse, and Robert Curthose, was not to be entertained. Such being his circumstances, Alexis felt that craft, not courage, must save him from the peril which he dreaded.

While Alexis was forming his plans, and the French crusaders were approaching his territories, Hugh, Count of Vermandois, who had previously gone to Rome and received the banner of the

church from the hands of the Pope, happened to be wrecked on the shores of the Epirus. Trusting to make the Count, who was brother of King Philip, a hostage for the good conduct of his comrades, Alexis ordered that he should be brought as a prisoner to Constantinople. As no secret was made of this faithless proceeding, Godfrey of Bouillon, soon after having landed at Philippopoli, became aware of the circumstance, and immediately despatched messengers to demand the Count's liberation. The Emperor, on receiving Godfrey's message, returned an answer the reverse of satisfactory; and soon a crowd of Greeks, flying to the capital, brought information that the crusaders were ravaging the country and treating the inhabitants as enemies. Terrified at the consequences of his policy, Alexis sent to promise satisfaction; and Godfrey, content with this assurance, marched quietly to Constantinople.

Untaught by the lesson he had received, Alexis no sooner saw the crusaders at his gates, than he conceived the great idea of starving them into submission. With this view he forbade the Greeks to supply provisions. The crusaders, however, were in a position to help themselves with impunity; and dispersing through the suburbs and over the country, they plundered palaces and villages, and brought to the camp everything necessary for their subsistence. The inconvenience of such a system was of course soon felt; and it became clear that a better state

of feeling must be cultivated. Gradually both parties became reasonable. After some hesitation, Alexis sent provisions ; and, with some reluctance, the crusaders refrained from pillage.

But scarcely had this difficulty been overcome, when new disputes arose. Between the Greeks and the crusaders, no sympathy could exist. Reciprocal contempt was daily manifested. The Greeks regarded the crusaders as barbarians ; and the crusaders taunted the Greeks with being unable to fight their own battles. Quarrels, of course, were of frequent occurrence. On one occasion a chief among the crusaders proposed to seize Constantinople. On more than one occasion the Frank warriors were on the point of conflict with the Emperor's mercenaries. Even the leaders of the crusade showed little inclination to restrain the soldiers of the cross from chastising the insolence of the Greeks.

Alexis now felt that there was too strong a probability of the crusaders' standard waving over the walls of Constantinople. It was in these circumstances, that the Emperor set his heart upon a scheme, which he believed would avert mischief. This was to obtain from the chiefs of the crusade such an oath of fidelity and obedience, as could not decently be broken. At first this object seemed unattainable ; but, having already extracted such an oath from the Count of Vermandois, Alexis did not despair of success with other peers and princes. On

hearing this proposal, the pilgrims expressed nothing but indignation. But after the Emperor had sent his son to the crusaders' camp as a hostage, Godfrey, with Robert Curthose, and the Count of Flanders, and the Count of Blois, yielded. Raymond of Thoulouse scornfully refused. "I have not," exclaimed the aged warrior, "come to the East to seek a master." But Alexis found a way of overcoming Raymond's scruples; and fixed a day for the crusaders performing their homage.

At the appointed time, Godfrey and his companions proceeded to the imperial palace, and found that no pains had been spared to impress them with a high opinion of the Emperor's wealth and grandeur. Seated on his throne and surrounded by his court, Alexis received their homage, and placed his empire under their protection. Entirely occupied with the attempt to conceal his weakness by a display of superficial magnificence, Alexis regaled his fancy with the idea that he was achieving a victory over the French princes, and did not perceive that those who had bent their knees before his throne, felt a thorough contempt for his power. While the Emperor was presenting the crusaders with rich gifts, a slight incident awoke him from his delusion.

Among the French nobles present at the memorable ceremony, was a count, known as Robert of Paris. This warrior, whose name is celebrated in history and romance, little relishing the airs assumed by the court

of Constantinople, could not refrain from showing his contempt. With a gesture of scorn for the ceremonial by which he was surrounded, Robert advanced to the throne before which the crusaders had bowed, and, disregarding all signs, seated himself by the Emperor's side. The Greeks expressed intense horror at the Count's defiance of etiquette, and even the Franks could not help feeling the awkwardness of the scene.

"When you are in a foreign country," said one of the crusaders, pulling Count Robert by the arm, "you ought to respect its customs."

"Truly!" exclaimed Robert, looking mockingly towards Alexis; "but this is a pleasant clown who is seated, while so many noble captains are standing."

"What is your birth, and which is your country?" asked Alexis, detaining Robert of Paris, as the crusaders were leaving.

"I am a Frenchman," replied the Count, "and of the highest rank of nobles. And one thing I know, that in my country there is a place near a church, whither repair all who are eager to signalise their valour. I have often been there, without anybody having ventured to present himself before me."

"If you waited there without enemies," said Alexis, turning uneasily from Count Robert, but taking no notice of the challenge, "you are now going where you are likely to meet with plenty."

CHAPTER IX.

BOEMUND OF TARENTUM.

WHILE the warriors and nobles of France were arming for the Holy War, a Norman prince, known to posterity as "the Ulysses of the First Crusade," roused the zeal of the inhabitants of southern Italy.

Early in the eleventh century, some pilgrim-knights of Normandy, having landed on the southern coast of Italy, aided the dwellers in Salerno to repel an incursion of the Saracens. Animated by reports of their countrymen's valour, Robert and William Guiscard, sons of Tancred of Hauteville, a Norman gentleman, conducted to Italy a band of warriors, and effected a series of conquests, which were consolidated into the kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

Boemund, one of the sons of Robert Guiscard, was hardly inferior to his father in courage and talent. A native of Italy, but Norman to the backbone, he early displayed, in full perfection, the qualities that made the Normans so formidable. Brave, accomplished, and utterly unscrupulous, he fought with

courage, spoke with eloquence, and acted without regard either to conscience or God.

At an early age, Boemund had fought by his father's side against the Emperor of the East, and had imbibed a notion that the Greck empire would one day be the prize of his valour and genius. But fortune did not prove quite favourable to such an aspiration. At his father's death, the ambitious Norman found himself without means to make any great attempt. But, though without lands or living, "Boemund, son of Guiscard," was still formidable; and having declared war against his brother Roger, he succeeded in making that prince yield the principality of Tarentum.

For a time Boemund figured as Prince of Tarentum. But Tarentum was far too small a place for a Norman noble of such aspiring vein; and he perpetually watched for an opportunity of realising his ambitious project. When he learned that the princes of France were arming for the crusade, he congratulated himself on his day having arrived, and with a smile of ridicule at the enthusiasm that prompted such an expedition, considered how it could be turned to account in advancing his fortunes.

Boemund's brains, once set to work, soon enabled him to comprehend his position. Musing over the matter, he decided that, at this crisis of his career, it was necessary to have an army of his own. This was a difficulty; for Tarentum could not furnish any large

body of fighting men. But he soon formed a plan for getting as many soldiers as he wished, and immediately proceeded to put the plan in execution.

At that time, Boemund's brother was besieging Amalfi, a city lying within the territories of the Guiscards, but refusing to acknowledge their authority. No expedition could have been more favourable to Boemund's wishes. Proceeding to Amalfi, the Prince of Tarentum affected to take great interest in the siege, and insinuated himself into the good graces of the soldiers. Indeed he was precisely the man to win their respect. Besides having a strong arm and an eloquent tongue, he had been gifted by nature with a most noble presence. His tall stature, enabling him to tower above ordinary men, never failed to impress beholders; and his aquiline features, fair hair, and blue eyes, at once marked him as a genuine descendant of those valiant Northmen, who, with Roll the Ganger, sailed up the Seine and seized on Neustria.

After reaching Amalfi and surveying his brother's army, Boemund went to work with his wonted craft. He preached the crusade in language not less eloquent than Peter; and he produced under the walls of Amalfi an effect hardly less marvellous than Urban had produced at the Council of Clermont. Everybody was attracted by his orations; and ere long the camp throbbed with enthusiasm for the Holy War.

“God wills it!” at length resounded from thousands of voices.

“Yes,” said Boemund, “it is the will of God; and when all the brave captains and soldiers of Europe have taken the cross, we shall be unworthy of Heaven if we hesitate.”

Congratulating himself on the triumph of his eloquence, Boemund tore to pieces his red banner, formed the strips into crosses, and presented them to the besiegers. Ere long the whole army vowed to accompany him to the Holy Land; and, the siege having been abandoned, he prepared for the expedition. Nor was his success temporary. No sooner had Boemund set up his standard, than around its red folds came warriors of all ranks; and he found himself at the head of thirty thousand men, eager to be gone. To the camp of Boemund, among other barons and knights, came his nephew Tancred, destined to be celebrated in chronicle and song.

Having embarked for Greece, the Prince of Tarentum landed at Durazzo. The sight of this place, where in youth he had distinguished himself in battle against the Greeks, recalled all Boemund's aspirations; and he immediately sent to recommend Godfrey of Bouillon to seize the empire of the East. Godfrey, however, reminded the Norman chief, that they were soldiers of the cross; that they were in arms, not to take Constantinople, but to deliver Jerusalem; and that their duty as Christians was not to attack the

Greeks, but to vanquish the Pagans. Boemund nevertheless indulged his soul with visions of acquiring the empire, and, without any effort to restrain the excesses of his soldiers, advanced through Macedonia.

It was with a feeling of dread, that Alexis heard of Boemund having sent proposals to Godfrey. The Emperor knew the Norman warrior's character and feared his ambition. But ambition might be thwarted by cunning, and courage might be overcome by bribery. Without delay, therefore, Alexis invited Boemund to Constantinople ; and Boemund, preceding his army, hastened forward to oppose craft to craft.

Alexis received Boemund with the utmost distinction, and Boemund treated Alexis with the utmost deference. They complimented each other on their exploits, and exchanged vows of friendship. As both were devoid of conscience, no scruple interfered with their promises ; and while Alexis solemnly engaged to grant the Prince of Tarentum large possessions in Greece, Boemund vowed to prove himself in all things the Emperor's faithful vassal.

At length their conversation took a turn which betrayed Boemund into rashness and startled Alexis into sincerity. The Emperor happened to display to the Norman prince a chamber with treasure ; and Boemund, surprised at the sight, could not, even in the Emperor's presence, repress his admiration.

"There is here," he exclaimed, "enough wherewith to conquer kingdoms."

“Let these treasures,” said Alexis, turning to the officers of his household, “be immediately conveyed to the tent of the Prince of Tarentum.”

“Ah,” said Boemund, affecting to decline the gift, “your munificence is too great. I cannot accept this treasure ; but, if you would bind me to you for ever, confer on me the dignity of Grand Domestic of the Empire.”

“I cannot at present grant that dignity,” answered Alexis, starting at a demand which alarmed him with the recollection that he had used the office as a stepping-stone to the throne ; “but I promise it, brave prince, as the reward of your future services.”

Boemund, baffled, retired to muse over his prospects ; and Alexis remained to consider how he might best free his capital from the presence of men, whose pride he was weary of flattering and whose avarice he was weary of gratifying.

CHAPTER X.

THE SIEGE OF NICE.

THE crusaders, gathering gradually from different nations to the banner of the cross before the walls of Constantinople, presented so formidable an appearance, that the Emperor of the East grew more and more alarmed. Forgetting the fear he had entertained of Moslem foes, Alexis became only anxious to be saved from Christian friends. At length, in May, 1097, the wily Greek had the satisfaction of knowing that the crusaders were on the other side of the Bosphorus; and, by way of fulfilling a promise to accompany them with an army to Jerusalem, he prepared to follow their march—"like the bird that seeks its prey in the lion's track."

Having landed in Asia Minor, the crusaders crossed the plains of Bithynia, and advanced, in martial array, towards Nice. A hundred thousand horsemen, and five hundred thousand footmen, formed the army. Dukes who had mortgaged their duchies, and counts who had pledged their counties, figured as its chiefs. Priests, whose sober vestments proclaimed them dead

to the world, and prelates, whose chain mail and priceless chargers proved that they laid claim to no such distinction, mingled with dukes and counts. Women in their teens, who relished every novelty, and grandmothers of threescore, who declared that all was vanity and vexation of spirit, conversed by the way with warriors and churchmen. Young knights, with white hawks on their wrists and red scarfs on their arms, listened with patience to stately dames and talked merrily to laughing damsels, or rode to and fro to view the country, and guard against being attacked unawares. As yet most people found the expedition cheerful and exciting. Everything, indeed, wore an encouraging aspect. Banners waved; bridles rang; mail rattled; steeds pranced; trumpets sounded; monks sang hymns of praise; and heralds shouted "Save the Holy Sepulchre!" Such was the composition, and such the appearance, of that army with which Godfrey of Bouillon on his war-horse, and Peter the Hermit on his mule, approached the capital of Bithynia. Never had the Saracens seen such foes as those who were now marching to deliver the Holy Sepulchre.

But the Sultan of Nice held no counsel with despair. Whatever came to pass, he was not likely to be found by armed foemen lolling luxuriously in the recesses of his palace. Exhibiting characteristic energy at the news of the approach of foes, he fortified his capital, and summoned subjects and allies to

his aid. Confident in the fortification and the enthusiasm of Nice, the Sultan placed his wife, his children, and his treasures within the walls; and having encouraged the garrison with assurances of aid and promises of reward, he encamped, with a numerous army, on the neighbouring mountains.

Scarcely had the Sultan completed his preparations, when, on the 10th of May, the crusaders appeared before Nice. The aspect of the place was not such as to encourage hopes of an easy capture. Strong walls environed the town; hundreds of towers and turrets protected the walls; a ditch broad and deep surrounded the fortifications; Lake Ascanius washed the foundations, and communicated conveniently with the sea. Moreover, the Sultan's choicest troops manned the ramparts; and, in white tents spread over the mountain side, around the black banner of the Abassides, a mighty army of Moslem warriors lay ready, at a signal, to grasp their spears and rush down to the city's rescue. Every precaution, which skill could devise, the Sultan had taken to prevent the triumph anticipated by the Christian invaders.

But the Normans and Franks were not daunted. Encamping on a level plain, watered by rivulets that flowed from the mountains, the crusaders commenced the siege with zeal and courage. Such, indeed, was the enthusiasm, that chiefs did the work of soldiers; and priests, passing continually along the ranks, reminded them of the holy cause of which they were

the champions. Under such influences, the crusaders made several attempts with more zeal than discretion; but the exploits performed convinced the Saracens of the marvellous valour with which they had to contend.

The Sultan, on becoming acquainted with the operations of the Frank warriors, considered that the time had come for a great effort; and, calling his chiefs together, he addressed them in inspiring language, promised them not only victory, but the richest booty, and assured them that their enemies were at discord with each other, and would be easily vanquished. This ceremony over, the Sultan girded on his armour; and, at the head of his soldiers, suddenly descended from the mountains and advanced to the attack.

But the Moslem warrior found that he had to encounter men of very different mould from those who composed the mob led by Walter the Penniless. At first, indeed, fortune seemed to smile on his adventure. Charging the soldiers of Raymond of Thoulouse, he succeeded in producing some disorder among the Provençals. But the voice and example of the old Count soon restored the courage of his men; and, ere the Saracens had time to pursue their advantage, Curthose and the Count of Flanders charged upon them with the lance. A brief but bloody struggle ensued; and the Sultan, finding his antagonists infinitely more formidable than he had anticipated, sounded a retreat.

The crusaders raised the song of triumph, and the Sultan, finding how futile had been his efforts, abandoned Nice to its fate, and postponed a decisive battle with the Christian warriors. Relieved from the presence of a watchful foe, the crusaders pressed the siege with renewed vigour; and with the aid of a Lombard engineer, carried on the work of destruction. All the warlike science of the age was brought to bear upon the siege. Rams battered the walls; balisters unceasingly discharged huge stones; catapults slung blocks of wood and masses of stone with a crash into the city; and tall wooden towers, wheeled forward to the ramparts, conveyed the besiegers to close conflict with the besieged.*

Nevertheless, Nice held out bravely; and week after week passed without the crusaders gaining any signal advantage. Every male inhabitant, capable of drawing a bow or casting a stone, had taken arms; and the defence was of the most desperate nature. Machines covered the ramparts, and hurled destruction upon the assailants; beams of wooden and blocks of

* "We must not think," says Fuller, "that the world was at a loss for war-tools before the brood of guns was hatched. It had the battering ram, first found out by Epeus at the taking of Troy: the balista, to discharge great stones, invented by the Phœnicians: the catapulta, being a sling of mighty strength, whereof the Syrians were authors. But these and many more voluminous engines (for the ram alone had one hundred men to work it) are now virtually epitomised in the cannon."—*History of the Holy War*.

stone fell constantly ; and one Saracen of gigantic proportions particularly distinguished himself during the siege. He seldom missed his aim ; and with arrows, javelins, and stones, he was equally successful. One day when thus engaged, he stood up and defied the bravest Christian, and loaded them with abuse. A hundred arrows were immediately directed against him ; but he seemed to bear a charmed life. At length Godfrey of Bouillon seized a crossbow and took aim. In another moment the huge carcass of the Saracen rolled into the ditch, shot through the heart.

By this time, the siege of Nice had lasted for several weeks, and the crusaders perceived that, so long as supplies reached the city by Lake Ascanius, the defence might be indefinitely protracted. Measures were, therefore, taken ; and one night boats, brought overland, were launched in the water. On board of each boat a band of warriors embarked ; and next morning the besieged, with dismay, observed the lake covered with countless foes. Ere long it became known throughout the city, that, while attempting to escape, the wife and children of the Sultan had been captured ; and the Saracens gave way to despair.

It was now the 20th of June ; and the crusaders, considering the result no longer doubtful, girded themselves up for a last strenuous effort. Alexis, however, had prepared at this point to cheat them out of the fruits of their valour. He had previously sent to the

siege an admiral and a general ; and these men, coming ostensibly to aid the crusaders, but in reality to prevent them getting possession of Nice, obtained admission at a critical moment, and persuaded the inhabitants that, to escape the vengeance of the Franks, their best plan was to surrender to the Emperor. The Saracens took the advice of the Greeks ; and when the crusaders were about to make a crowning effort, the standard of Alexis was suddenly displayed from tower and turret.

Enraged at what they regarded as perfidy, the crusaders retired to their tents and gave vent to their indignation. Alexis, however, invited the leaders to a conference ; and, having highly lauded their valour and conduct, he contrived, by valuable gifts, to silence their murmurs. Nevertheless, the crusaders now regarded the Emperor of the East as the worst of foes ; and, with undisguised hatred and contempt for the potentate to whom they had done homage, they set forward from Nice on their march towards the Holy City.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BATTLE OF DOGORGAN.

BEFORE marching from Nice, the pilgrim princes, the more easily to procure provisions and forage by the way, arrayed their men in two divisions. One of these, and by far the most numerous, was conducted by Godfrey of Bouillon, Raymond of Thoulouse, the Count of Vermandois, and the Count of Flanders. The other, composed principally of fighting men, brought by Norman princes to the holy war, was headed by Curthose, Tancred, and Boemund of Tarentum.

While Godfrey, at the head of the main army, took his way across the plain of Doryleum, Boemund and the Norman warriors, pursuing a somewhat different course, marched along the margin of a river, and entered the valley of Dogorgan. They were utterly unacquainted with the country. But, confident in their valour, they followed the stream, and trusted to sharp swords and strong arms extricating them from any dangers into which they might fall.

On the evening of the 30th of June, the Norman

crusaders reached a spot where they were tempted to encamp. At one side was the river, on the other a sedgy marsh; while around grew plenty of grass; and, hard by, abundance of timber. Everything appearing secure, Boemund called a halt; heralds, according to custom, cried three times, "Save the Holy Sepulchre!" and the crusaders having pitched their tents, and tethered their horses, indulged in what cheer they had, and stretched their limbs to rest.

The sun set; darkness overshadowed the valley: and the night passed over in peace. At break of day, however, Greeks came to the camp with intelligence that the Sultan of Nice was on the opposite side of the river with a numerous army; and, scarcely had the crusaders sprung in a somewhat incredulous mood from their lairs, when clouds of dust, on the ridge of the mountains, announced the presence of a foe. All doubt was now removed. The Sultan, with two hundred thousand Moslems at his back, had come to enjoy his revenge.

It was well for the crusaders, in that hour of peril, they had at their head such a warrior as Boemund. With skill and coolness worthy of his reputation, the Norman chief rapidly prepared for resistance. Having hastily fortified the camp with wagons and palisades, and placed the women and sick in the centre, he posted the infantry around, and moved forward the cavalry, under Tancred and Curthose, to dispute the passage of the river, lance in hand.

Boemund, after thus arraying his men, stationed himself, with his riders, on some rising ground, there to watch the battle, and issue such orders as events rendered expedient.

The Prince of Tarentum had scarcely formed the crusaders into battle order, when white turbans, and green vests, and long spears, on the edge of the mountain, began to move: and the Saracens descended into the valley. Blowing their horns, beating their drums, and mingling their voices in a fearful yell, the turbaned warriors approached the river's margin, and thence discharged volleys of arrows and darts, which rattled among the Norman knights. This led to serious consequences; for though the linked mail of the riders saved them from injury, many horses, writhing under wounds and utterly unused to the Saracens' drums and yells, grew restive at such sounds, capered, pranced, and flung furiously. The position of the horsemen, who were exposed to a sun of intolerable brightness, gradually became worse; and, galled by the incessant flight of arrows, they gave way to impatience, which, at first, manifested itself in muttered imprecations and at length broke through all restraint.

"We must take order with the infidel rabble," cried one warrior.

"Yes," said a dozen voices, "let us charge:" and with a cry of "Dieu aide," the Norman knights dashed into the river, and spurred through the stream.

But the Saracens had no intention of indulging their foes with a close conflict. Trusting to their horses, which seemed swifter than eagles, they opened their ranks whenever the Normans presented themselves, dispersed to a distance, and then rallying, discharged fresh missiles. Unaccustomed to such a style of warfare, the crusaders soon fell into disorder; and the Saracens availed themselves so speedily of the circumstance, that saddle after saddle emptied, and knight after knight reeled to the dust. The carnage increased every minute; and horses without riders, running hither and thither, added to the confusion.

The armed pilgrims now began to lose energy. It was in vain that such leaders as Tancred and Count Robert of Paris threw themselves into the *melée*. Count Robert, after having seen forty of his comrades killed, fell mortally wounded. Tancred, whose lance had been broken, was on the point of being struck down; but Boemund, hastily crossing the stream, shouted his war-cry, in a voice of thunder, spurred in to the rescue, and bore off his nephew in safety.

While this struggle was taking place, and troop after troop of Saracens descended the hill to continue the fight, the Sultan, with a body of choice horsemen, dashed over to the Christian camp, and scattered Boemund's infantry right and left. Fearful was the scene. Priests gave themselves up for lost; and

dames and damsels began to anticipate a fate worse than death.

But the priests and ladies soon found that there was hope. At this point Curthose, who had prudently refrained from crossing the river, advanced to the rescue, and with a shout of "God wills it!" spurred into the midst of the foe. Nothing could resist his onset. Followed by a host of knights, with his banner flying and his sword flashing, the Norman duke overcame all obstacles, and, cutting down three of the principal Saracens with his own hand, inspired every crusader with new courage.

While Curthose was performing prodigies of valour, and carving a path through the Saracens, Boemund, hearing of the danger to which the camp was exposed, drew his rein, and hastened with his riders to the rescue. Meeting a body of crusaders who were flying, he pulled up his steed, and pointed out the absurdity of their conduct.

"Whither are you riding, Christian soldiers?" he asked. "Don't you see that the horses of the Saracens have more speed than yours?"

"It is true," muttered the fugitives in accents of despondency.

"Come, then, follow me," said Boemund; "I will show you a safer road than flight;" and charging the Saracens, sword in hand, he succeeded in expelling Sultan and soldiers from the camp.

Nevertheless the battle wore an aspect most alarm-

ing to the crusaders. Notwithstanding the prowess displayed by Boemund and Curthose, and the valour with which they inspired their followers, every one felt that the struggle could not longer be maintained. The sun was high in the heavens, the heat was scorching; men were choked with dust, parched with thirst, and fatigued with bearing up the fight against such odds; and horses, tired, wounded, and bleeding, hardly retained sufficient strength to carry their riders. While in this plight they retreated to the camp. Before them were hosts of Saracens eager for carnage; and at the head of the Saracens was a Sultan panting for revenge.

“We need cherish no hope of seeing Jerusalem,” said the crusaders, mournfully. “Our doom is clearly to die to-day.”

“We need not yet despair,” Boemund would argue, “it is hours since I despatched messengers to the Duke of Lorraine. Ere this he knows our peril. Any moment may bring thousands of spears to our rescue. If not, we can at least sell our lives dearly.”

Boemund’s courage, however, was shared by few. Heroism itself could not sustain the spirit of a handful of men, who saw before them a host bent on their destruction, and thousands of sabres thirsting for their blood. Everywhere in the Christian camp appeared consternation and despair. Women were bewailing their fate; priests were imploring God’s aid; and

soldiers, on their knees, were entreating priests to grant them absolution.

But suddenly, from the midst of dismay and dread, arose a shout of exultation, which was echoed and re-echoed by hill and rock. The imperilled Christians might well shout with joy ; for clarion and trumpet announced the approach of friends ; and soon, under the sacred standard, borne by the Count of Vermandois, fifty thousand horsemen, headed by Godfrey of Bouillon, came cantering over the hill.

The Sultan of Nice now seemed to think his plight the reverse of enviable. After pausing to survey the coming foe, and attempting to appear disdainful of the danger, he deemed it prudent to sound a retreat and return to the mountain. Perhaps he thought the crusaders would not follow. If so, he was mistaken. No sooner did Godfrey arrive, than he set his men in order and prepared for the assault.

All were soon ready ; but, ere Godfrey gave the signal, priests passed along the lines, and after bestowing the church's blessing, reminded the Christian warriors of the Holy Sepulchre, and exhorted them to fight manfully. An order to rush upon the foe was then passed from rank to rank ; and, with a cry of "God wills it!" every man sprang forward.

The Sultan witnessed the preparations of the crusaders from the mountain, to which he had retreated, and appeared to consider that hills, and crags, and rocks guaranteed his safety. But the Moslem chief

soon found that he was in error. Indeed the crusaders, to whom the sight of their slaughtered comrades was as scarlet to the wounded bull, felt a craving for carnage, and the soldiers of Raymond of Thoulouse ascended the acclivity with such impetuosity, that the first ranks of the Saracens were instantly broken.

While Raymond and his men were carrying everything before them, the Saracens found themselves attacked on one flank by Boemund and Curthose, and on the other by Godfrey of Bouillon and the Count of Flanders. All was now disorder; and to make their situation desperate, the Bishop of Puy, who had conducted the reserve round a hill, fell upon their rear and completed the rout. Vain then proved the sound of Saracenic horn and drum; vain the sweep of sword and crooked sabre. Surrounded as the Saracens were on all sides, the idea of flight scarcely suggested a hope of safety. Animated, however, by despair, they endeavoured to escape through woods and over rocks. But the crusaders proved vigilant and active; multitudes of the turbaned warriors fell on the mountain side; and the Sultan, seeing his army scattered in dismay, lost heart, spurred from the scene of action, "and, to prop up his credit, gave out that he had gotten the day, pleasing himself to be a conqueror in report."

The pilgrims, finding themselves victors, proceeded to the camp of the enemy, where a rich booty rewarded their valour. Provisions, treasures, camels—

which they had never before seen—and tents, the magnificence of which excited their admiration, fell into their possession.

As evening was closing over the plains of Doryleum, the crusaders, loaded with booty, returned to their camp. Before them marched priests singing hymns of gratitude; behind them came the camels and horses which had become their prey. Many, however, had to deplore the loss of brothers and kinsmen. No fewer than four thousand European warriors had perished in the *melée* of the morning. But the mourners were not without consolation. Indeed, it was believed that the souls of those who fell with arms in their hands and the cross on their shoulders, were purified from all sin; and priests, while committing the dead to their graves in the valley of Dogorgan, reminded survivors that the names of men who died for the Holy Sepulchre, were at once enrolled in the army of martyrs.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SIEGE OF ANTIOCH.

AFTER celebrating their victory at Dogorgan, the warriors of the cross took their way towards Antioch. Marching in a body, they avoided the hazard of an attack by superior numbers, as on the 1st of July. But they were ere long exposed to other disasters, scarcely less disagreeable.

It soon appeared, indeed, that the march of the crusaders to Antioch was not to prove quite so pleasant as that to Nice had been. The Sultan, with a desire for vengeance, but without hope of gratifying it in battle, determined to lay waste the country through which his conquerors had to pass : and performed the operation so effectually, that they soon experienced extreme perplexity. Neither food for men nor fodder for horses could be met with ; and the pilgrims for some time subsisted on roots of plants, and such ears of corn as the Sultan's cavalry had failed to destroy.

The utmost distress soon prevailed. Hawks, hounds, horses, and human beings suffered alike.

Hawks drooped and died; hounds scampered off in search of food; horses sank exhausted; women rolled on the sand, and in accents of despair invoked death; and robust men, giving way to toil and famine, perished by hundreds. Ere long, to the suffering caused by want of food was added the misery arising from scarcity of water. At length not a well, not a spring, not a brook was to be met with. Every throat was parched—every tongue felt as if on fire.

But at this desperate stage Providence, by sending the dogs back to the camp, mercifully interposed to save the Christian army from destruction. Observing that their canine companions returned with wet skins and paws covered with sand, the crusaders judged that water was near, and, following the foot-prints, found a supply. No discovery could have been more welcome. The pilgrims rushed in a mass towards the place, and threw themselves into the water. But moderation, under the circumstances, was hardly to be expected; and while hundreds, from quenching their thirst without prudence, died on the spot, many became too sick to continue their journey. But still in the midst of suffering the cry of the chiefs was “Onward;” and still the burden of the heralds’ proclamation was—“Save the Holy Sepulchre!”

At length this march, memorable for its miseries, drew to a close; and about the middle of October, the crusaders, passing mountain chains, came in sight of a fertile and charming country, and forgot all

mishaps and misfortunes, as the city of Antioch appeared before their eyes.

Antioch was known as "Queen of the East," and seemed not unworthy of the name. A beautiful situation, a lofty castle, magnificent edifices, and strong walls fortified by four hundred and sixty towers, gave a dignified and picturesque aspect to the city. On the north rose one mountain covered with houses and gardens; on the south another mountain celebrated for its forests and springs. The suburbs, which boasted of the fountain of Daphne, were fair to look upon: and the ramparts were washed by the river Orontes, which communicated with a lake abounding in fish, and, at a few miles' distance, flowed into the sea.

But to the crusaders Antioch was interesting from its historical connection with the faith of which they were the champions. At Antioch the disciples of our Redeemer assumed the name of Christians; and there Peter was named first bishop of the Christian church. Moreover, Antioch was associated with miracles; with saints and martyrs; and with Christian pilgrims, who regarded the "Queen of the East" with hardly less veneration than the Holy City.

When approached by the crusaders, Antioch was possessed by the Saracens, governed by a prince named Auxian, and prepared for an obstinate defence. But the warriors of the West were in no mood to be daunted. The successes achieved by the army on its march had been considerable. Tancred and Baldwin

of Bouillon had taken Tarsus. Tancred had then seized Malmistra and Alexandretta; while Baldwin not only made himself master of the principality of Edessa, but, by marriage with the daughter of an Armenian prince, extended his sovereignty over the richest provinces of ancient Assyria. Besides, many cities of Minor Asia had voluntarily offered homage; and the crusaders, elate with success, approached Antioch with an idea that no enterprise was too difficult for them to accomplish.

Between the pilgrims, however, and the city of which they proposed to take possession, flowed the Orontes, which was spanned by a bridge defended by towers masked with iron. In order to arrive before the walls, it was necessary to seize this bridge, and the adventure seemed somewhat perilous. But Curthose led the van; and the Norman duke, who never shrunk from danger in any form, charged with so much valour that every obstacle gave way. Forcing a passage, and cutting down all who opposed, Curthose chased the defenders of the bridge to the gates of Antioch, while the main army, with banners flying and trumpets sounding, passed the river.

Encamping near the walls of Antioch, the crusaders held a council of war, and, after much solemn debate, resolved on a siege. With this object they advanced to the gates. Strangely enough, however, not a foe appeared on the ramparts. The crusaders, of course, felt some surprise; but, believing that men

who lay hidden at such a time would prove an easy prey, they trusted to the course of events, and said—"Let us meanwhile eat, drink, and be merry."

And now the armed pilgrims brought discredit on their enterprise; in fact, the soldiers of the cross abandoned themselves to license and debauchery, and perpetrated outrages utterly at variance with the laws of God and man. All the country around Antioch witnessed their reckless proceedings. In every village the work of plunder went on; and in every orchard, crusaders made love to the dark-eyed damsels of Syria. Even men dedicated to the most austere of professions were infected with the prevailing immorality; and Christian bishops, forgetful of vows, might have been seen stretched on the grass and playing at dice with nymphs whose reputations were not the highest.

While the crusaders were defying danger and decency, the Saracens availed themselves of the circumstance to make a sally from Antioch. The camp, scarcely guarded, could not resist their progress; and sweeping out of the city, they cut off all whom the hope of pleasure or plunder had attracted to the villages and orchards. The Saracens, on returning, cast the heads of the slain into the camp; and the Christians, roused to fury, vowed to revenge the slaughter of their comrades.

The crusaders now resolved upon storming Antioch; and a signal was given for the attack. Having neither scaling ladders nor machines, however, their

efforts failed ; and they found the necessity of a more systematic siege. Accordingly, they entrenched their camp, constructed a bridge over the Orontes, erected wooden towers, and occupied themselves with the blockade. But at this point they experienced the consequences of their imprudence : for winter setting in, and provisions beginning to fail, they were exposed at once to the hazard of cold and famine.

When matters reached this stage, Curthose and Boemund scoured the neighbourhood in search of provisions ; and the Norman princes returned with a considerable supply. But the relief was temporary, and every subsequent expedition of the kind was less successful. Indeed, the forays were so frequent, that the country soon had nothing to yield, and the most experienced border riders, who in later centuries won fame by their predatory exploits, would have given up the game. Neither Kinmont Willie nor Christy of the Clinthill could have found it otherwise than impossible to wring out of Upper Syria sufficient spoil to subsist the hungry army before Antioch.

The plight of the crusaders soon became intolerable. Not only was the want of food severely felt : other horrors accompanied hunger. One day they suffered from torrents of rain ; another day, they had to struggle against gusts of wind. When the rain fell and the wind blew, the camp was flooded with water, and the tents were carried away by the hurricane. The crusaders were in rags ; and disease ap-

peared to add to their miseries. At this point many abandoned the camp. Among these were Peter the Hermit and Robert Curthose. But Peter, having been pursued, was brought forcibly back; and Curthose, after being summoned in the name of Christ, returned from Loadicea.

At the time when matters were getting past the worst, the Caliph of Bagdad sent ambassadors to offer the crusaders his alliance and protection. Wretched as was their plight, the chiefs answered with indignation, and sent the Caliph a message as full of defiance as if they had been safe and comfortable in their French and Norman castles.

One day, when winter had worn away, the crusaders' chiefs learned with gratification that a fleet of Pisan and Genoese ships had entered the port of St. Simeon. No sooner did the news spread, than numbers of the soldiers rushed off to hear news and purchase provisions. While returning to the camp, the pilgrims were attacked by Saracens; and being, for the most part, unarmed, they dispersed in dismay. Hearing of this disaster, Godfrey of Bouillon, with Curthose and Tancred, called out their men, mounted their horses, and galloped to the rescue.

At this point, the Prince of Antioch was on a tower of his palace; and, having witnessed the skirmish, he descended, and ordered a numerous body of troops to the rescue. Accompanying them to the bridge, he pointed to the enemy whom they had to

encounter, and closed the gate after them. "This," said he, "can only be opened to you if you return victorious."

The Saracens, thus incited, issued forth from the walls; and, meeting the crusaders as they rushed forward, commenced a skirmish. But the Moslem warriors soon became convinced of their inferiority; and, giving way in a body, made an attempt to regain the city. Godfrey, however, who had no idea of letting his foes off so easily, forced them to renew the combat. A sanguinary battle was then fought. No generalship was displayed; but Pagan and Christian contended hand to hand, and steel to steel. Helmet and turban mingled confusedly in the struggle, and on all sides deeds of marvellous prowess were performed.

But none showed more valour than Godfrey and Curthose. Godfrey, defied by a gigantic Saracen to single combat, spurred forward, and, with one sweep of his sword, divided the challenger's body from shoulder to haunch. Curthose, assailed by the Saracen who figured as chief in command, raised his falchion, and with a stroke cleft the infidel's head from crown to chest. "Pagan dog!" exclaimed Curthose, as the Saracen fell lifeless to the ground, "I devote thy impure soul to the powers of hell." The carnage and the chase continued for hours; and not till it was dark did Auxian open the gates and admit the fugitives.

After the fight before Antioch, the Saracens regarded the besiegers with awe ; but month after month passed away, and May, 1098, was drawing to a close, without the prospect of a surrender. The tempting prize for which the crusaders had waited so long, appeared not unlikely to escape their grasp. Vague rumours already announced the march of a Moslem host, when circumstances opened up to the warriors of the cross a prospect of seizing by stratagem the city which they had been unable to win by valour.

CHAPTER XIII.

EMIPHER AND BOEMUND.

FROM the day on which the crusaders seized the bridge, and approached the walls of Antioch, Boemund, who had left Constantinople with the determination to possess a principality long ere the pilgrims reached Jerusalem, indulged in visions of his steeds stalled in the stables of the palace, his soldiers manning every tower on the walls, and his red banner waving from the highest turret of the castle. Even when matters were at the worst, the Prince of Tarentum patiently enacted his part in the enterprise. At length fortune, which throughout the siege had in reality been favourable to his aspirations, condescended to place the game in his hands.

It happened that within the beleaguered city, an apostate from Christianity was entrusted with an important post, without being very well satisfied, either with himself or his situation. The name of this man was Emipher; and he had originally been an Armenian, of obscure parentage. His father is said to have been a maker of cuirasses. But whatever

the sire's condition, the son's aspirations were high; and, in efforts to realise them, he was neither restrained by considerations of morality nor religion. At an early age, he renounced his faith to take service with the Prince of Antioch: and, having once assumed the turban, he played his cards so cleverly, that when the crusaders appeared before Antioch, he was high in the prince's confidence and in command of the principal towers.

At the beginning of the siege, Emipher would seem to have discharged his duty with fidelity. But as months passed over, the idea of betraying his trust to advance his fortunes, took possession of the renegade's mind. At last he formed his resolution, and contrived to make the Prince of Tarentum aware of his wish for some conversation on business of importance. Boemund, who was not slow to comprehend such a message from such a quarter, intimated his readiness to grant an interview.

Emipher and Boemund met without delay; and the hypocritical renegade, pretending to open his heart to the ambitious Norman, expressed deep regret at having deserted the religion of Christ, and deplored the persecution to which Christians were exposed. Boemund, who comprehended the point towards which his new acquaintance was driving, encouraged the traitor to proceed; and Emipher, assuming a solemn air, declared that Christ had appeared in a dream and commanded him to betray Antioch to the crusaders.

Boemund, who could play the hypocrite as well as Emipher, preached a little sermon, and proved beyond question that never before had man been vouchsafed such a golden opportunity of making a full and complete atonement for an act of apostasy.

After this interview, during which, of course, Emipher was assured of high reward, in the event of his scheme proving successful, Boemund called the pilgrim princes together, and offered to have the gates of Antioch thrown open to them on certain conditions, one of which, he hinted, would be the sovereignty of the city for himself. But the chiefs, far from relishing the project, distinctly refused their countenance; and Raymond of Thoulouse elicited general applause, when he expressed his opposition in the strongest language. Boemund retired from the council baffled and vexed; but he felt that his failure was temporary, and that his proposal would ere long find more favour in the eyes of his comrades.

The Prince of Tarentum was not deceived. Scarcely, indeed, had the crusaders rejected his offer, when news arrived which created the utmost consternation in the camp. The Sultan of Nice, it appeared, had succeeded in rousing half the East; and the Sultan of Mossoul, a man of age and experience, was marching at the head of four hundred thousand Moslem warriors to exterminate the Christians.

The pilgrim princes, alarmed at their prospects, now consulted Boemund, and on the 2nd of July,

gave their adhesion to his project. "After all," said they, "it was Jerusalem, and not Antioch, we came to deliver." Boemund, after hearing the explanations of his fellow-soldiers, and sneering at their confused efforts to appear consistent, communicated with Emipher, and made arrangements for the execution of the project.

Every precaution having been taken, Boemund, to throw the Prince of Antioch off his guard, gave out that he was going to encounter the Sultan of Mossoul, and marched the pilgrim army away from the walls. Halting near Antioch, he passed the day in a valley; and returning at night, took up his position beneath the towers, where Emipher was, with breathless anxiety, awaiting the result of the plot.

In fact, Emipher found his head in danger: for by some means a rumour spread through Antioch that treason was at work. Even the name of the traitor was whispered. But Emipher's audacity was equal to the crisis; and his cunning was equal to his audacity. On being summoned by the Prince, he appeared with perfect readiness, and gave advice for defeating conspiracy. Auxian, completely deceived, took the advice; and Emipher, loaded with thanks, returned to his post.

While Emipher meditated and reflected the day closed; darkness overshadowed the city; and gradually all became quiet. A storm which arose deepened the gloom and the silence, save where broken

by the flash of lightning and the roll of thunder. At that time the crusaders began to move noiselessly under the walls; and the Lombard engineer, having ascended to the ramparts by a ladder, returned to tell that all was ready for their reception.

But while Boemund's heart was beating high, and Emipher's heart was beating anxiously, an unexpected difficulty suddenly arose. Neither leaders nor men showed the slightest inclination to venture up the ladders. Threats and promises alike failed; and Boemund at length ascended alone, in the hope of his example inspiring them with courage. Even after this nobody moved, and the Prince of Tarentum reached the ramparts unattended. Emipher, however, received Boemund with joy, and at once presented terrible evidence of sincerity. "That," said he, pointing to a bed on which a man recently stabbed lay weltering in blood, "that is my brother; I have just killed him because he refused to join our enterprise."

Boemund, who perhaps did not feel so much horror at this fratricide as he ought, ascertained that everything was prepared, and descended to his comrades. With some difficulty he persuaded the Count of Flanders and sixty other crusaders to accompany him, and again ascended to the ramparts. Numbers then took courage; and, while Boemund was put by Emipher in possession of several towers, Godfrey, with Robert Curthose, having mounted the

ladders, caused trumpets to be sounded, and spread over the city, with a shout of "God wills it!"

The Prince of Antioch and his subjects, roused from their slumbers, started up in surprise at the shouts which resounded through the city. Feeling that he had been betrayed, Auxian endeavoured to escape, but fell before the weapons of his foes; and few of his subjects were more fortunate. Scarcely aware what had happened, they rushed hither and thither in amazement. No mercy was shown them; and the slaughter continued so long, that thousands fell victims.

When the morning of Friday the 4th of July, 1098, dawned, the citadel of Antioch was still in the hands of the Saracens. But the city was in possession of the crusaders. The streets were strewn with corpses, blood ran down the gutters, and the red flag of Boemund waved over the highest turret.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GREAT BATTLE.

A FEW days after Boemund had taken possession of Antioch, three hundred Saracens, mounted on Arab steeds, spurred towards the city and came close to the walls. The crusaders, who were still celebrating their success with festivities, felt some anxiety at this circumstance; and, ere long, they learned with alarm, that the Sultans of Mossoul and Nice, with nearly half a million of men, a hundred thousand horses, and fifteen thousand camels, had encamped on the Orontes.

The pilgrims had reason to regard the vicinity of such foes with dread. Much treasure had been found in Antioch, but no store of provisions; and the prospect of a siege was perplexing. Moreover, the Sultan, by seizing the pass of St. Simeon, cut off all hope of supplies from Europe; and the crusaders, starving in the midst of wealth, could not purchase the commonest necessities for their weight in gold.

It now became necessary to kill horses, and knights witnessed, with silent agony, the slaughter of war steeds that had carried them gallantly on

the day of Dogorgan. But this source was soon exhausted; and the crusaders found themselves in a wretched predicament. Men of all ranks fared alike; and the proudest of European princes were reduced to a plight that would have been ludicrous, had not the circumstances been too serious for mirth. Deaths and desertions took place by hundreds; and the despair grew so deep, that many uttered sentiments savouring of blasphemy.

Amid famine and despair, Boernund's characteristic courage sustained him. At first he addressed the crusaders in heroic language, and, finding that ineffectual, he pointed out the absurdity of lying down to die like dogs. "It is better," he said, "to lose your lives wholesale on the point of the sword, than to retail them out by famine." But eloquence and argument alike failed to create zeal and energy; and it became apparent that nothing less than a miracle could restore hope and courage.

One day, when affairs had reached a crisis, the chiefs of the crusade assembled to deliberate; and a priest of Marseilles presented himself. "St. Andrew," he said, "has appeared in a dream, and informed me, that by digging in the church of St. Peter, we will find the spear which pierced the side of our Redeemer, and that this weapon, carried at the head of our army, will insure us victory over our enemies." Believing, or affecting to believe, the story, the pilgrim princes repaired to the church, and, after much

digging, had the gratification of finding the object of their search.

No miracle could have been more beneficial in its results. The chiefs, on beholding the spear, felt their courage revive, and crusaders of all ranks, who had anxiously awaited the issue of the search, vociferously demanded to be led against the foe. The princes were in no humour to oppose a wish so loudly expressed. Before sallying forth, however, they determined to send to the Sultan of Mossoul, and selected Peter the Hermit as most capable of figuring as ambassador. Peter undertook the duty, and set out on his mission. One sight of the mystical spear had kindled his zeal to such a pitch, that no danger would have daunted him.

In the midst of the Saracen camp, the Sultan of Mossoul occupied a magnificent pavilion. It was formed so as to resemble a fortified city, divided into streets flanked with towers, furnished with every article that could contribute to oriental luxury, and so constructed as to accommodate two thousand people. In an apartment of this structure, ornamented with gems and gold, the Sultan, surrounded by Saracen chiefs, was engaged with a game of chess, when Peter the Hermit, arrayed in his woollen mantle, was introduced.

“What is your errand?” asked the old Moslem warrior, turning from his game, stroking his beard, and regarding the Hermit with contempt.

"I come in the name of the princes assembled in Antioch," said Peter, returning the Sultan's glance with stern pride; "and I conjure you in the name of God, to leave this principality. Go in peace, and I promise that you will not be molested. But if you refuse to go in peace, let a battle convince you of the justice of our cause."

"Return to those who sent you," said the Sultan, in a paroxysm of rage, "and tell them that it is for the conquered to receive conditions, not to dictate them. Bid thy captains hasten, and, this very day, implore my clemency. To-morrow they will find that their God, who could not save himself, will not save them from the fate prepared for them."

"Listen!" said Peter, utterly undismayed by the applause bestowed on the Sultan's speech by the Saracen chiefs around.

"Drive this vagabond away," exclaimed the Sultan, laying his hand on his sword; "these miserable mendicants unite blindness with insolence."

By this time, the crusaders were more eager than ever for battle; and when Peter carried the Sultan's answer to Antioch, the chiefs proclaimed that, next day, they would march against the foe. Some provisions having been accidentally obtained, every man had the benefit of a meal; and all having heard mass in the evening, lay down to await the break of day. Raymond of Thoulouse, who was suffering from a wound, agreed to remain and keep watch on the

citadel. Every other chief prepared to take part in the encounter.

When the morning of the 1st of July, the anniversary of the battle of Dogorgan, dawned, a slight shower came opportunely to refresh the atmosphere; and the gates of Antioch having been thrown open, the crusaders issued forth in order of battle. The Count of Vermandois bore the church's banner; the Bishop of Puy commanded the centre of the army, and fulfilled at once the functions of a skilful war-chief and apostolic legate; Godfrey of Bouillon led the right wing, mounted on the war-steed of Raymond of Thoulouse, and attended by his brother Eustace and his kinsman Baldwin du Bourg; while the left was under the auspices of Curthose and the Count of Flanders. In the rear was a body of reserve, among whom were the Anglo-Norman warriors, led by the Earl of Albemarle; and there Boemund assumed his post, with an eye on every part of the battle. Others were about to fight for life and victory; but Boemund was going to fight not only for life and victory, but for the principality of Antioch, and the great scheme which he hoped possession of Antioch would enable him to realise.

Marching westward to a semicircular plain, formed by the mountains bordering the Orontes, and covered with dry grass and bushes, the crusaders prepared for a decisive action. Never, perhaps, did an army reduced to such misery feel so confident of

victory. Most of the soldiers were in rags; many were suffering from famine; some were so weak, that they walked with difficulty; and others, in the absence of horses, rode on donkeys and camels. But enthusiasm made up for every defect; and they marched with the conviction that heaven had decreed a victory. Neither clarion nor trumpet announced their approach to the Saracens; but priests, walking in the van, bore aloft the spear found in St. Peter's church, and sang, in procession, the martial psalm, "Let God arise: let His enemies be scattered."

The Sultan of Mossoul sat in his magnificent tent, when his soldiers who had been posted nearest Antioch fell back upon the camp, and announced the enemy's approach. At first the Sultan could hardly believe the report; and on being assured of its correctness, he said, "Doubtless they come to implore clemency." But ere long he became convinced of his error, and, arousing himself from his Arabian repose, put on his armour, issued from his tent, ordered his trumpets to sound, and marshalled his troops for the conflict.

Both armies having formed in order for battle, Crusader and Saracen were soon face to face, and an awful pause of a few minutes gave the warriors of Christendom a sight of the overwhelming numbers they had to encounter. But nothing could damp their enthusiasm. They restrained their zeal, however, till

the Saracens, after discharging a flight of arrows, began the battle by a fierce onset; and then, giving way to an irresistible impulse, knight, squire, and groom charged impetuously forward, and, with a cry of "God wills it!" which resounded along the banks of the Orontes, swept before them both wings of the Sultan's army.

When the day opened so inauspiciously for the Saracens, the Sultan of Mossoul, who watched the conflict from a hill, must have been dismayed. But the aspect of the field suddenly changed. The Sultan of Nice, at the head of his cavalry, having made a circuit of the mountains, and returned by the river, attacked the crusaders in the rear, and menaced the reserve with destruction. In vain did Boemund exert his energy and his eloquence; in vain did Frank and Norman, Godfrey and Tancred, come to his aid. The rush of Arab cavalry, armed with clubs, bore down all opposition; and the Sultan of Nice fought like a lion, to avenge his defeats and retrieve his disasters. No efforts of valour availed to turn the tide of fight; and the standard of the church, wrenched from the Count of Vermandois, was held aloft as a trophy. But Aubrey De Vere, cutting his way to the sacred banner, brought it off dyed with infidel blood.

While the Christians struggled against fearful odds, and valorous exploits were performed on both sides, the Saracens set fire to the bushes and dry grass. Enveloped in clouds of smoke and flame, the

crusaders fell into confusion, and expressed their consternation in accents of despair.

“Where,” they asked, “is now the heavenly succour that was promised us?”

“Behold these horsemen in white,” cried the Bishop of Puy, pointing to a mountain; “heaven declares for you. The blessed martyrs—George, Demetrius, and Theodore—come to aid you, and to assure you of victory.”

“God wills it!” cried the crusaders, perhaps without pausing to inquire critically into the truth of the prelate’s statement.*

A rumour that celestial warriors were at hand spread from rank to rank; and the crusaders, inspired with a notion that the saints were doing battle on their behalf, renewed the conflict with fiery enthusiasm. Every crusader fought as if suddenly gifted with preternatural power; and the Saracens, disordered by the shock, gave way in dread. The Sultan of Nice and other leaders rallied their broken forces on an acclivity, and, sounding clarions and trumpets, endeavoured to renew the contest; but the attempt was abortive. After a faint resistance, the Saracens gave way in terror, and, pursued over plain and mountain, fell by thousands before the weapons of their foes.

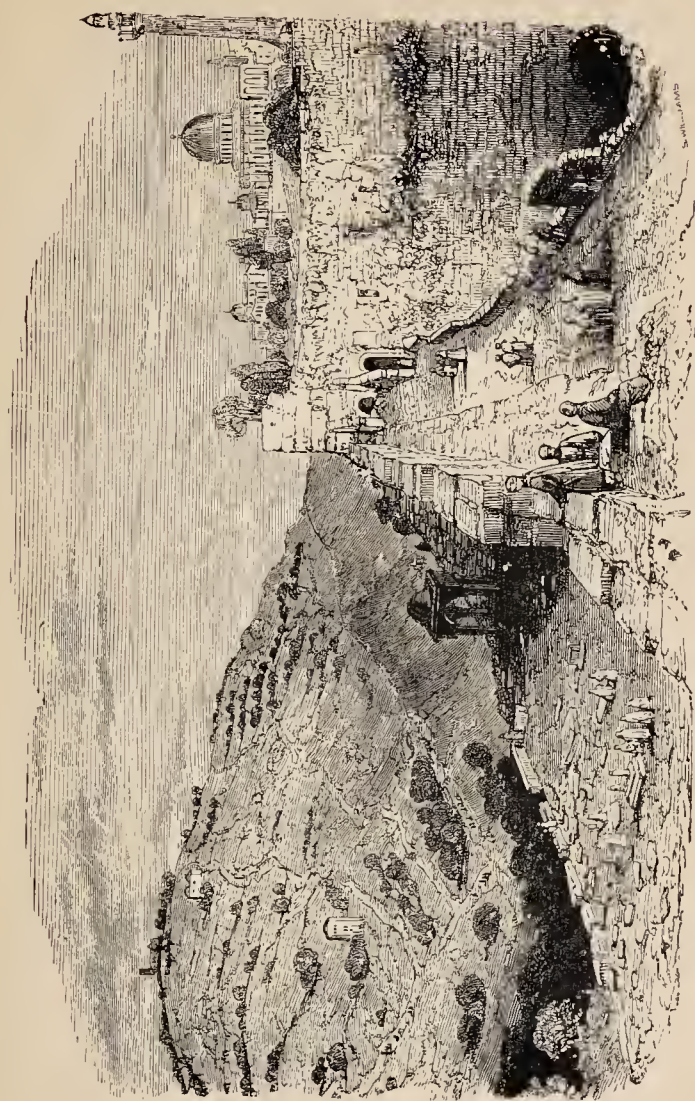
The crusaders mounted the horses of the slain,

* “Some,” says Fuller, “saw St. George in the air, with an army of white horses, fighting for them; but these did no doubt look through the spectacles of fancy.”

and it was not till nightfall that they drew their reins and wiped their swords. Even then some continued the chase through the gardens and villages on the Orontes. Aubrey de Vere urged on the pursuit so keenly, that hours after sunset he and his men found themselves miles from Antioch, and in a locality with which they were unacquainted. The predicament caused some dismay; but suddenly a star of excessive brightness seemed to light on De Vere's shield, and the phenomenon imparted comfort and hope to his followers. An idea that they were under heaven's especial protection instantly occurred to them; and they cried with one voice—"God wills our safety!" De Vere and his men found their way to the camp; and Aubrey, in memory of this adventure, assumed a star with streams as his badge. The star was afterwards carried by the De Veres when Earls of Oxford; and on Barnet field it caused the memorable blunder that ruined the army, which, under Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, was struggling against the establishment of despotism in England.

Meanwhile, the citadel of Antioch surrendered to Raymond of Thoulouse; and the result of "The Great Battle" caused joy and rejoicing throughout the city. Wants, wounds, and woes were all forgotten. The victory was so complete, as to decide for a time the war between Christian and Moslem; and pilgrims, armed and unarmed, indulged in a hope, unfelt for months, of soon kneeling at the Holy Sepulchre. No

serious efforts to oppose their progress were likely to be made. The Saracens, in fact, had little faith in their cause ; and those who had occupied the citadel, on surrendering, expressed a very general sentiment, when they exclaimed—"We now know that the God of the Christians must be the true God."



JERUSALEM AND THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

Crusades and Crusaders.]

CHAPTER XV.

SIEGE OF THE HOLY CITY.

A FEW days after the defeat of the Sultan of Mossoul, the pilgrim warriors assembled in a body, and implored the chiefs of the crusade to lead them towards Jerusalem. The princes and barons, however, were in no humour for the expedition. The idea of capturing a city and founding a sovereignty had caught the imagination of each; and, instead of encouraging the pilgrims to proceed towards the Holy Sepulchre, they used arguments to damp enthusiasm. "The summer is at its height," said they, "and we have no horses. We must wait till the season is cooler, and till we have replaced our war-steeds."

The crusaders accordingly remained at Antioch; and their abode in that fair city proved unfavourable to their enterprise. Besides being worried by disputes between Boemund and Raymond of Thoulouse, they were attacked by an epidemic, to which fifty thousand fell victims, among whom was the brave and pious Bishop of Puy.

Even when summer had passed, and the army had

diminished to fifty thousand men, the chiefs occupied themselves with petty enterprises, and wholly neglected the great object of their expedition. Besides, some of them, like the Count of Blois and the Count of Vermandois, returned to Europe. At length the soldiers declared, in disgust, that they would elect new leaders; and, alarmed at this threat, Raymond of Thoulouse, in company with Curthose and Tancred, took his way towards Jerusalem. Godfrey of Bouillon, with the Count of Flanders, speedily followed; and after consuming months in petty hostilities with Saracens, and in disputes about the sacred spear, between Curthose's chaplain—Arnold de Rohes—and the priest of Marseilles, the crusaders, on the morning of the 29th of May, 1099, ascended the heights of Emmaus, and at dawn came in sight of the Holy City.

“Jerusalem!” cried those who first descried the towers and walls.

“Jerusalem! Jerusalem!” shouted all the pilgrims as they uncovered their heads and rushed forward in ecstacy.

Lines of walls, groups of massive towers, and a few olive trees rising from the sterile plain, were all that met the thousands of arrested eyes. But the sight was enough. A thrilling and sublime emotion pervaded the army of crusaders, as they gazed on the city they had so earnestly longed to behold; and a voice seemed to sound in the ear of each, saying “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon

thou standest is holy." The horsemen sprung from their saddles. Some prostrated themselves and kissed the earth; others walked forward barefoot, and all, shedding penitential tears, renewed the vow they had made before leaving Europe.

While the crusaders, animated by Christian zeal, drew near to Jerusalem, a body of Saracens issued from the city to watch their movements and impede their march. But Tancred, who had already planted the Christian banner over Bethlehem, where the Redeemer of mankind was born, advanced at the head of his horsemen, and chased them to the gates. The pilgrim army then advanced; and the chiefs, preparing to commence the siege, posted their men to the north of the city, "being scarce assaultable on any other side, by reason of steep and broken rocks." Godfrey, with his brother Eustace of Bouillon, and his kinsman Baldwin du Bourg, set up his standard in the centre. On one hand of Godfrey encamped Raymond of Thoulouse; and, on the other, Robert Curthose, the Count of Flanders, and Edgar Atheling, who, after seating his nephew on the Scottish throne, had joined the crusaders at Loadicea, with the flower of that noble race which had for six centuries given kings and nobles to the British isles.

While the crusaders were glowing with religious fervour, inspired by a sight of the Holy City, a hermit, who had long lived on Mount Olivet, left his cell and appeared in the camp. Nothing more than his pre-

sence was wanting to fire their zeal. He recommended them to make an immediate assault and to trust for victory to the aid of Heaven. Chiefs and soldiers yielded to the anchorite's eloquence, and declared for taking the Holy City by storm.

There was more valour than discretion in all this. The crusaders, in fact, had no machines of war and scarcely a scaling-ladder. Nevertheless, their enthusiasm was such that nobody objected to the enterprise; and, at a given signal, they advanced. While some, under cover of shields, assailed the walls with hammers and pikes, others, ranged at a distance, annoyed the defenders of the city with slings and bows.

But the Emir of Jerusalem, whose garrison numbered forty thousand men, was in no yielding mood. Encouraging his men, he urged them to do their utmost, and to prove themselves worthy of their prophet. Machines, placed on the ramparts, discharged every species of missile; and blocks of stone, beams of wood, burning torches, boiling pitch, and Greek fire, wrought fearful havoc. Still the crusaders persevered, and the outer wall fell before their impetuous efforts. The inner wall, however, presented an impassable barrier. An escalade was indeed attempted; but the crusaders, finding that scarcely one of the ladders was of sufficient length to reach the ramparts, abandoned the assault; and, returning to their tents, prepared to prosecute the siege after a more regular fashion.

Unfortunately, the crusaders were in no position to exercise patience. Before their arrival at Jerusalem, the Saracens had scoured the neighbourhood, carried everything in the shape of provender to the city, and cut off the supply of water by choking up wells and poisoning cisterns. At the same time, the Kedron was dry; the fountain of Shiloe, only flowing at intervals, could not suffice for fifty thousand people; and most of the water had to be carried, in skins, from fountains or rivulets many miles off. Encamped on arid plains, and under a glowing sun, everybody experienced more or less misery; and as days passed over, men, women, and children, gave way to despair. "There is only one remedy for this state of things," said the pilgrim princes—"Jerusalem must be taken."

Luckily ere matters reached a crisis, the crusaders received intelligence which revived their courage. At Joppa, an ancient seaport, forty miles from Jerusalem, some Genoese ships, with provisions and warlike stores, and engineers on board, had appeared. Joy pervaded the camp; and a troop of cavalry was despatched to act as convoy to the men and ammunition. On reaching Joppa, the crusaders found that the Genoese fleet had been destroyed by Saracens. But the mariners and engineers, having saved some provisions and tools, were conducted in safety to Jerusalem.

Nothing but wood was now wanting for the con-

struction of engines of war. At first some difficulty was apprehended. A Syrian, however, presented himself to Curthose and the Count of Flanders, and conducted them to a mountain, where trees grew, some thirty miles from Jerusalem. The distance proved no obstacle. The forest soon resounded with axes; and the trees, when felled, were drawn to the camp by oxen shod with iron. Meanwhile the machines were rapidly constructed; and, ere long, the pilgrim princes found themselves in a position to prosecute the siege with some prospect of success.

Before renewing their efforts, however, the crusaders, advised by the Hermit of Mount Olivet, resolved on a grand religious procession. Headed by the clergy, clad in white, bearing images, and singing psalms, the warriors of the cross walked round Jerusalem, with trumpets sounding and banners displayed. On the summit of Mount Olivet, they halted in view of the city they had come to rescue; and priests, in solemn accents, lauded their zeal and fired their enthusiasm.

"You see Christ's heritage trodden by the feet of sinners," said Arnold de Rohes, pointing toward the city; "but it shall soon be the reward of your labours. There are the Holy Places, in which God will bless all your victories, and pardon all your sins."

"Yes," exclaimed Peter the Hermit, "a few hours—and towers, the last bulwark of Christ's foes,

shall be the asylum of Christians; and mosques, which stand upon Christian ruins, shall be temples for the true God."

On the morning of Thursday, the 14th of July, the crusaders roused themselves to action; and no sooner did day break, than the sound of trumpets summoned them to arms. All the engines constructed by the Genoese were immediately at work; and the Saracens perceived with astonishment, and not without fear, the preparations made for their destruction. They had no time, however, to indulge in pensive reflections. Huge towers wheeled forward, brought the crusaders face to face with their foes; and Christian fought hand to hand with Moslem. Godfrey particularly signalised his prowess; all the chiefs were foremost in the assault; the soldiers fought courageously and well; and even "women played the men and fought most valiantly in armour."

The Emir of Jerusalem was now somewhat daunted. But the idea of drooping was out of the question; and the Saracens had girded themselves up for a desperate defence. Every effort was made to drive back the besiegers. Gigantic Saracens, on the ramparts, encountered the crusaders in the wooden towers; and boiling oil, Greek fire, stones and beams, were mercilessly poured upon those who assailed the walls. The crusaders soon found their situation disheartening. The most strenuous endeavours to achieve success failed; and after an exhausting contest of twelve

hours, they were fain to beat a retreat amid the shouts and laughter of their infidel foes.

"These Christians," cried the Saracens jeeringly from the ramparts, "worship a God who cannot aid them."

"It seems," said Curthose to the Count of Flanders, as they retired to their camp, "that God does not yet deem us worthy of entering his Holy City, and adoring at the tomb of his Son."

The elation of the Saracens, and the depression of the crusaders, were ephemeral. Both, however, dreading a surprise, passed Thursday night in anxiety and doubt. The Saracens feared an assault: the crusaders feared a sally. But the night sped away without a collision, and when Friday morning came, Moslem and Christian prepared for a decisive encounter.

The crusaders by this time had a new motive for exertion. They had intercepted a pigeon in its flight towards the city; and found under its wing a letter, the contents of which caused alarm. Succour, in fact, was promised without fail to the besieged; and under such circumstances, delay was not to be thought of by the besiegers. While, therefore, the clergy walked in procession to Mount Olivet, the soldiers repaired to the walls, and resumed the struggle with a zeal and determination still greater than had been displayed on the previous day.

The onset was impetuous, and the shock terrible; for the resistance was as obstinate as the assault

was enthusiastic. The besiegers launched stones and beams against the ramparts; the besieged retaliated with equal fierceness; and the carnage on both sides was fearful. Godfrey of Bouillon exposed himself to every danger, but seemed to bear a charmed life; for, though a mark for a hundred missiles, he remained erect urging on friends and striking down foes.

It happened that the engines constructed by the Genoese proved peculiarly malignant to the Saracens; and alarmed at the havoc wrought, the besieged "cased the outside of their walls with bags of chaff, straw, and such pliable matter, which conquered the engines of the Christians by yielding into them." But observing that one huge catapulta continued to make alarming ravages, the Saracens conducted two of their "wise women" to the wall with the object of charming aside beams and stones. Neither word nor spell, however, produced the slightest effect. The catapulta was no respecter of persons; and the unfortunate witches perishing miserably, furnished the Saracens with fresh evidence of its destructive powers.

But noon passed, afternoon was speeding away, and evening was drawing near, and still the crusaders made little progress; and at length the Greek fire, setting their machines in a blaze, reduced them to despondency; while the Saracens, pointing to the heaps of besiegers slain at the foot of the ramparts, uttered loud and taunting cries. At the moment, however, when the crusaders, fatigued with the weight of

their armour, covered with dust and oppressed with heat, leant on their swords and gave way to despair, a horseman, waving a buckler, appeared on Mount Olivet.

“Behold,” cried Godfrey, “St. George has come again to our aid, and makes a signal for us to enter the Holy City.”

“God wills it!” cried the crusaders, as they returned, with one accord, to the assault.

And now before the walls of Jerusalem was re-kindled that fiery zeal, which had swept Mossoul’s Sultan and his soldiery from the plains of Antioch. Not even warriors of the highest patriotism and chivalry—not the victors of Cressy or Agincourt, could have long resisted men who fought with a belief that the saints were doing battle in their behalf. Every eye glanced with religious fervour, and every arm struck with supernatural prowess. Pious frenzy rendered the armed pilgrims irresistible. Amid clouds of flame, and smoke, and dust, Godfrey, preceded by Reimbault Cretan, who appears first to have footed the walls, entered the city; and Eustace of Bouillon, with a host of warriors, followed with shouts of victory. Curthose and the Count of Flanders, aware of the success of their comrades, redoubled every effort, and scaled the walls sword in hand. Raymond of Thoulouse, opposed to the Emir of Jerusalem in person, met with a sturdy resistance; but, disdaining all danger, the aged Count leaped from his wooden

tower to the ramparts—Saracens bearing back at the sound of his war-ery, and the Emir flying before the sweep of his sword.

Jerusalem now resounded with loud cries of vengeance. The conquerors, under a delusion that they were rendering God service, slaughtered without mercy the enemies of their religion. Thousands upon thousands of the vanquished fell; and for days the blood of Saracens, old and young, flowed like water.*

While swords were clashing and blood was flowing, Godfrey of Bouillon, leaving the scene of carnage, laying down his sword, uncovering his head, and baring his feet, walked in a posture of humility to the church of the Resurrection, and prostrated himself on the tomb of Christ. On hearing of the pious chief's act of devotion, the crusaders hastened to follow his example: and, preceded by the clergy, walked in solemn procession, singing penitential psalms and songs of thanksgiving.

Ere this ceremony was over, the Christians of Jerusalem emerged from places of concealment, and advanced to meet their deliverers. The spectacle touched every heart, and brought tears to every eye. But from among princes and peers, they singled out

* "If you wish to know what we did to the enemies we found in the city, learn that in the portico of Solomon and in the Temple, our horses walked up to the knees in the impure blood of Saracens."—*Letter of the Pilgrim Princes to the Pope.*

the figure of the little man, clad in the woollen mantle, who five years before had walked wildly about the Holy City, busying his brain with projects for their relief. It was Peter the Hermit whom they regarded as their liberator; and, crowding around him, they expressed boundless astonishment that one man should have been able to rouse so many nations, and to work so mighty a deliverance.



GODFREY OF BOUILLON AT THE TOMB OF CHRIST.

BOOK SECOND.

THE KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM

CHAPTER I.

GODFREY AND HIS SUCCESSORS.

ON the 23rd of July, 1099, Jerusalem witnessed an impressive ceremony. On that day, the crusaders, who, a week earlier, had entered the Holy City sword in hand, assembled for the purpose of electing one of the pilgrim princes as king. Owing to the paucity of candidates for regal honours, the duty does not appear to have been very perplexing. It is true, that the names of Robert Curthose, Robert of Flanders, Raymond of Thoulouse, and Godfrey of Bouillon, were bruited about. But Curthose and the Flemish Count intimated their intention of returning forthwith to Europe; and the Count of Thoulouse having, by his haughty and impracticable temper, rendered himself unpopular, Godfrey was generally recognised as the most likely man to dignify the office.

Nevertheless, difficulties appear to have arisen; and the crusaders, to terminate disputes, appointed ten of the most sober and discreet pilgrims to decide on the rival claims. After fasting and praying, these personages proceeded to the work of election, and closely inquired into the character of the candidates. Even servants were examined as to the habits of their masters! and those of Godfrey gave such evidence as to his religious devotion as was deemed conclusive.

"What faults have you observed in the Duke of Lorraine?" asked the council.

"The only fault we find with our master," answered the witnesses, "is, that when matins are over, he will stay so long in church to learn the name of every image and picture, that dinner is often spoiled by his long tarrying."

"Ah," said the council, "as this man's worst vice appears to us a great virtue, Jerusalem could not have a better sovereign."

The nomination of Godfrey of Bouillon was accordingly decided on; and when heralds proclaimed his name, the liveliest joy pervaded the city. The successful candidate expressed his sense of the distinction conferred on him; but, with pious modesty, he declined the symbols of regal power. "I cannot consent," he said, "to wear a crown of gold, where the Saviour of mankind wore a crown of thorns." Godfrey contented himself with the title of "First

Baron and Defender of the Holy Sepulchre ;” but he was invested with sovereign authority, and was, in reality, as much a king as any man could have been under the circumstances.

Immediately after the election of Godfrey, the pilgrim princes attended him in triumph to the church of the Holy Sepulchre ; and the pious warrior there took an oath to rule according to the laws of honour and justice. Scarcely, however, was the ceremony over, when startling intelligence reached Jerusalem. It appeared, in fact, that a mighty army had arrived at Ascalon, bent on giving the crusaders battle ; and that the Moslem host was under the command of the Emir Afdhal, one of the most renowned of Moslem warriors.

The news spread terror throughout Jerusalem. Indeed it was known that the Emir had sworn, in presence of the Caliph, to annihilate the crusaders, and it was feared that he might have the power to execute his oath. Godfrey, however, was undaunted. Without delay he summoned all Christians capable of bearing arms to march with him from Jerusalem ; and requested Arnold de Rohes, recently elected as Patriarch, to accompany the army with the wood of the true cross. At first, Curthose and Raymond of Thoulouse, declaring that their vow was accomplished, exhibited indifference, and expressed their opinion that no army was approaching. But both, on being assured of the danger, summoned their men, girded on

their mail, mounted their chargers, and marched with Godfrey to meet the foe.

While women and sick men remained in Jerusalem, under the auspices of Peter the Hermit and the clergy, who offered up prayers, day and night, for the success of the Christian arms, Godfrey, having at the head of the crusaders marched across a sandy country, halted, on the evening of the 11th of August, by the margin of the Sorec, a little torrent flowing through a plain between the cities of Joppa and Ascalon. While encamped there, at evening, the crusaders suddenly perceived at some distance what appeared to them an armed multitude, and two hundred horsemen spurred out to reconnoitre. On returning, they reported that what looked like an army was, in reality, a huge drove of cattle and camels, and the soldiers of the cross intimated their desire to seize so valuable a booty. Godfrey, however, restrained them. "I see nothing in this," said he, "but a stratagem of the enemy to throw us into disorder. I beg, therefore, that no man will leave his ranks."

Events soon vindicated the wisdom of Godfrey's admonition. As evening advanced, news reached the camp that the Saracens were then within three leagues, and awaiting a favourable opportunity to attack. The crusading chiefs then formed their soldiers into nine divisions, and having kept them under arms all night, prepared, at daybreak, for a decisive encounter. The Patriarch, after carrying the cross

through the ranks, and blessing the whole army, gave the signal for marching. The crusaders, fully armed, fell on their knees, implored Heaven's aid in the battle, and then, rising with fresh ardour, advanced in order. As they did so the droves of camels and oxen, seen on the previous evening, fell into their rear and followed their movements.

Meanwhile the Emir Afdhal set the Saracens in order of battle on the verge of the plain of Ascalon. To the west of the Saracens, and situated on the coast, was the city, over which the Moslem banners waved; and to the east and west were the sea and mountains which protected their rear. Afdhal's army, which was infinitely more numerous than that of the crusaders, was arranged, like theirs, in two lines, and was most formidable in appearance. The Emir occupied a position in the centre; and did all that a brave man could to animate his troops to do their duty.

Everything now seemed to promise Afdhal victory, but a sudden terror seized the Saracens at the sight of the Christian army. In fact, the droves of cattle following the crusaders, in the midst of the confusion and clouds of dust, appeared like so many squadrons of horse. The Saracens, completely deceived, believed that multitudes of Christians had arrived from Europe, and that the crusaders were more numerous than they. It was in vain that the Emir endeavoured to dispel the delusion and restore the courage of his troops. They were quite crestfallen.

While the Saracens were in dismay and doubt, Robert Curthose, at the head of the European cavalry, broke their ranks, and penetrating to their centre, overthrew all who opposed, captured the Moslem standard, and put Afdhal himself in no small jeopardy; and the European infantry, following in the track of Curthose, and casting away javelin and bow, wielded their swords with terrible effect. On all sides the Saracens were thrown into disorder. In vain did a band of Ethiopians, who first placed one knee on the ground to launch javelins, and then sprung up with long flails, armed with balls of iron, attempt to turn the fortune of the day. Yielding before the lances of Godfrey and his knights, the Ethiopians dispersed; and the Saracens, flying in masses, were so hotly pursued, that many perished in the sea, and thousands were crushed to death on the drawbridge, while attempting to find an asylum in Ascalon. Afdhal, after leaving his sword on the field, narrowly escaped to the city; and, viewing the destruction of his army from the walls, he shed tears of anger, and cursed Mahomet for deserting faithful disciples.

Afdhal embarked for Egypt, not believing himself to be safe in Ascalon. Indeed, the crusaders might, with little difficulty, have made themselves masters of that city, but for an unfortunate quarrel between Godfrey and Raymond of Thoulouse, which was nearly producing fatal consequences. As it was, the cru-

saders, loaded with booty and followed by the droves of cattle, marched in triumph to Jerusalem.

After the battle of Ascalon, most of the pilgrim princes prepared to depart from the Holy City. Raymond of Thoulouse, who had sworn never to return to the West, repaired to Constantinople, and received from the Emperor a grant of the city of Laodicea. Eustace of Bouillon, brother of Godfrey, and Robert, Count of Flanders, repaired to Europe, and, taking possession of their hereditary estates, passed their lives in peace and prosperity. Curthose was less fortunate. He, indeed, reached Normandy and took possession of his dukedom; but some years later, his territory was invaded by his younger brother, Henry, King of England; and Curthose, vanquished and taken at Tenchebray, was conveyed to Cardiff Castle, and kept as a state prisoner till 1148, when, at an advanced age, he terminated a life of misery and woe.

Like the pilgrim princes, Peter the Hermit considered his work accomplished when the Holy Sepulchre was rescued. While on his homeward voyage, in company with a nobleman, Peter found himself in danger of shipwreck, and vowed if saved to build an abbey in honour of the Holy Sepulchre. Escaping the peril, he founded a monastery on the banks of the Maes, and lived there for many years in humble penitence.*

* "Several families," says Michaud, "have pretended to be

After the departure of his comrades-in-arms, Godfrey was left with a few hundred knights to defend the Holy City and the kingdom, which so much blood and valour had been expended to gain. But the wisdom and heroism of the man rendered him almost equal to the task; and he had little doubt of receiving important aid from Europe. Indeed, those who had left the army of crusaders, and returned home without taking part in the siege of Jerusalem, were accused of cowardice; and both the Count of Blois and the Count of Vermandois, who had deserted the pilgrim army at Antioch, found themselves in such bad odour, that they resolved on a new expedition. But of the multitude of crusaders who left Europe under their guidance, not more than a handful ever reached Jerusalem; and the Count of Vermandois, attacked and defeated, fled to Tarsus, where he died of his wounds.

Godfrey did not survive to learn the fate of these pilgrims. He lived long enough, however, to do much good—to extend the frontiers of his kingdom—to divide the conquered lands among the companions of his victories, and to promulgate the code of legislation known as the “Assizes of Jerusalem.”

It happened that Tancred, having been sent into Galilee, was successful in taking Tiberias and other

descended from Peter the Hermit. The most rational and best supported claim is that of the family of Souliers, which still exists in the Limousin.”—*Note to History of the Crusades.*

cities. Placed in possession of the country he had conquered, Tancred attacked the territories of the Sultan of Damascus, and the Sultan not unnaturally retaliated.

When informed of Tancred's danger, Godfrey marched to his assistance; and he had succeeded in defeating the Saracens, and set out on his return to Jerusalem, when he was met by the Emir of Ceserea. The Emir presented an offering of the fruit of the country, and Godfrey, by way of courtesy, accepted a cedar apple. He had scarcely eaten this, however, when he suddenly became sick; and his knights in alarm conveyed him to Joppa. At Joppa Godfrey grew worse and worse; and on the 18th of July, 1100, after committing the kingdom of Jerusalem to the companions of his victories, he breathed his last. Having been carried to the Holy City, and borne up the ascent of Calvary, the remains of Godfrey were laid near the Sepulchre which he had rescued from desecration; and his death was mourned by the Christians whom he had freed from oppression.

Immediately after Godfrey was laid at rest on Mount Calvary, the Patriarch and the Barons of Jerusalem engaged in disputes as to the choice of a prince to occupy the throne, which the death of Godfrey had rendered vacant. The Patriarch, claiming the crown as his own, sent messengers to Boemund of Antioch to come and defend the cause of the church. The Barons, denying the Patriarch's right,

despatched deputies to Baldwin of Edessa, asking him to take possession of his brother's throne. The messengers sent to Antioch returned with intelligence, that Boemund had been made prisoner while on an expedition against the Turks. The deputies despatched to Edessa, brought back the assurance that Baldwin would ere long appear at Jerusalem to take possession of the crown.

The prize was not particularly tempting; for Baldwin was master of a rich and magnificent territory. But his ambition was fired with the prospect of figuring as a king; and, making over Edessa to his kinsman, Baldwin du Bourg, he set out for Jerusalem at the head of fourteen hundred men. On reaching the Holy City, the brother of Godfrey was welcomed with enthusiasm by the inhabitants; and the Patriarch, though he at first held aloof, gradually came to reason, and at length consented to perform the ceremony of coronation.

Baldwin was well qualified to extend the limits of the Christian kingdom. No sooner was he recognised as sovereign of Jerusalem, than he signalised his capacity as a warrior by expeditions against the Saracens, and with such success as astonished his adversaries. City after city yielded to his arms; and as monuments of his genius as a conqueror, he could soon point to Ceserea and Sidon, Tripoli and Acre, all destined to be more or less important in the struggles for the Holy Sepulchre.

Baldwin was not blessed with heirs; and when he died, his kinsman, Baldwin du Bourg, happening to visit Jerusalem at the time, was elected king and placed on the vacant throne. Baldwin, resigning the principality of Antioch to Joceline de Courtenay, received the crown of Godfrey, carried on war with the Saracens, and succeeded in winning the favour and maintaining the interests of his subjects. Most of the pilgrim princes who had rescued the Holy Sepulchre, and won for themselves principalities, had disappeared. Raymond of Thoulouse, after wandering over the East, had fallen while besieging Tripoli, which was afterwards bestowed on his descendants. Boemund, after attempting to realise his youthful aspirations and making war on the Empire of Constantinople, returned to Tarentum, and, in that little state, died of despondency and despair. Tancred, while governing Antioch during the minority of Boemund's son, was killed when engaged in war with the Saracens. Baldwin du Bourg, therefore, was respected in no small degree, as about the last of the companions of Godfrey.

While Baldwin occupied the throne, Fulke, Count of Anjou, with a notion of consoling himself for the loss of a wife to whom he had been devotedly attached, resolved on a pilgrimage to Palestine. Leaving his county to his son Geoffrey, the ancestor of the Plantagenets, Fulke appeared at Jerusalem, and won general admiration by the qualities

he displayed. Baldwin, pleased with Fulke, offered the illustrious pilgrim the hand of his eldest daughter ; and Fulke, accepting the proposal with joy, espoused Millicent, the heiress of Jerusalem.

Soon after the marriage of his daughter, Baldwin expired ; and Fulke, as husband of Millicent, was crowned King of Jerusalem. But one day, while hunting on the plains of Acre, he was killed by a fall from his horse ; and his son Baldwin succeeded to the throne.

It was now that the Christian states in Asia gave evident symptoms of that decline, which, in spite of all efforts to avert their fate, gradually brought them to their melancholy catastrophe. Baldwin the Third was a boy of thirteen when his father died : and he began to reign under the auspices of his mother. Baldwin was a youth of high courage, and Millicent a woman of masculine spirit. But the kingdom of Godfrey was in no condition to be defended by a woman and a boy ; and, ere long, the conquest, by a Moslem chief, of one of the most important principalities won by the pilgrim princes, made the Christians of the East turn imploringly for aid to the warriors of the West.

CHAPTER II.

THE FALL OF EDESSA.

WHEN Baldwin du Bourg surrendered the sovereignty of Edessa to ascend the throne of Jerusalem, one of the barons to whom he owed his elevation was Joceline de Courtenay.

The circumstance was calculated to cause some surprise: for Baldwin and Joceline were not supposed to be on the most friendly terms. Indeed, Joceline, after being in other days loaded with favours by Baldwin, had manifested so little gratitude, that he was expelled by his patron from the Euphrates, and compelled to take refuge at Jerusalem. But when Baldwin became a candidate for the regal dignity, all quarrels appeared to be forgotten; and when Baldwin placed the crown of Jerusalem on his head, Joceline was gifted with the principality of Edessa.

For many years Joceline de Courtenay maintained feudal state at Edessa, and constant war with the infidels on the banks of the Euphrates. Even time did not tame his warlike energy: and, in old age, he continued terrible to the enemies of his faith. One

day, however, while besieging a fortress near Aleppo, the old warrior was crushed beneath the ruins, and dragged out in so bruised a condition, that no hope was entertained of his recovery. Conveyed to Edessa, and placed on a couch, he there calmly awaited the destroyer, whom he had often defied in the ranks of battle.

While Joceline was passing his last hours wearily at Edessa, he received intelligence that the Saracens were besieging one of his strongholds, and sent for the heir of his name and his dominions.

“My son,” said the aged warrior, “go instantly and attack the foe.”

“I fear,” said young Joceline, “that we have not men enough to encounter the enemy.”

Indignant that, under such circumstances, a son of his should talk of fear, and determined to show a great example, the dying man caused himself to be placed on a litter, and carried at the head of his soldiers. On the way he was informed that the Saracens had retired from the siege, and smiled grimly, as if gratified at the terror associated with his name. Next moment he ordered the litter to stop; and he expired amid his soldiers, while his eyes turned towards heaven, as if rendering thanks for the flight of his enemies.

The defence of Edessa now devolved upon the son of the departed hero; but young Joceline was by no means equal to the duty. From boyhood he had been

addicted to dissipation; and no sooner did the grave close over his father, than he took up his abode on the Euphrates, and indulged his inclinations without stint. In a delicious retreat on the banks of the river, he pursued a thorough system of debauchery, and neglected every measure essential for the security of the principality.

Meanwhile a Moslem warrior, named Sanguin, who had obtained the principality of Mossoul, with Aleppo and other Syrian cities, cast his eyes longingly on Edessa, and only awaited a favourable opportunity of taking the city. The prize was tempting to an ambitious soldier; and the walls had, from neglect, become so frail, that no formidable opposition was apprehended.

Joceline was still occupied with his debaucheries, when one day startled with intelligence that Sanguin had appeared before the city with a formidable army. With his nerves in disorder and his ideas in confusion, the youthful prince scarcely knew on which side to turn. In extreme perplexity, he sent to the Queen of Jerusalem and the Prince of Antioch, explaining his danger, and imploring aid. But no one was in a position to attend to the application; and the Christians of the East soon learned, that, after pressing the siege for a month, the Saracens had entered Edessa as conquerors, and put the inhabitants to the sword.

Soon after having captured Edessa, Sanguin,

whose pride success had elevated to the highest pitch, perished by the hands of slaves whom he had oppressed; and Joceline de Courtenay, rousing himself from slothful indulgence, buckled on his armour to regain his inheritance. Fortune seemed to smile on Joceline's efforts. Availing himself of the confusion consequent on Sanguin's assassination, he led his men to Edessa in the darkness of night, and succeeded in re-taking the city. But unhappily he was less fortunate in regard to the citadel; and when Nouredin, the son of Sanguin, unexpectedly arrived before the walls, the Christians found themselves in a desperate situation between the garrison and the besiegers.

Joceline and his friends now perceived that their plight was the reverse of enviable. There appeared, indeed, no hope of safety but in flight, and they resolved to fly. At midnight, accordingly, the gates were thrown open; and the Christians, issuing forth in silence, endeavoured to escape. But few were fortunate enough to accomplish their object. A signal made by the garrison roused the besiegers to arms; and the soldiers of Nouredin, rushing to the gates, intercepted the fugitives, and cut them down without mercy. Some thousands of warriors, closing their ranks, forced a passage through the Saracen host; but, pursued towards the Euphrates, they fell in heaps. Only a handful reached the abode of friends to tell that the Christians of Edessa were slaughtered,

and that citadel and city remained in the possession of the foe.

The conquerors of Edessa used their victory without mercy, and without forbearance. Thirty thousand Christians are said to have perished by the swords of the Moslems; many thousands more were carried into slavery; and even the walls, the towers, and the churches, were razed to the ground.

Joceline de Courtenay, after the loss of his principality, fell into the hands of the Saracens; and, having been carried captive to Aleppo, died there in misery, in prison, and in chains.

CHAPTER III.

THE PREACHING OF ST. BERNARD.

IN the year 1137, when England was entering on that dynastic war, between Stephen and the Empress Maud, which terminated in the accession of the Plantagenets to the throne, Louis the Sixth, after having governed France for thirty years, with credit to himself and advantage to his kingdom, departed this life at Paris. When prostrated on his uneasy couch, the dying King gave his heir that kind of advice, which comes so solemnly from the lips of a man whose soul is going to judgment. "Remember," said he, "that royalty is a public trust, for the exercise of which a rigorous account will be exacted by Him, who has the sole disposal of crowns."

Louis the Young, to whom this admonition was addressed, ascended the French throne when scarcely more than eighteen, and espoused Eleanor, daughter of the Duke of Aquitaine. The King, who had been educated with great care, gave promise of rivalling the policy and prowess of his father; and the young Queen, besides being endowed by fortune with a mag-

nificent duchy, had been gifted by nature with rare beauty and intellect. Everything prognosticated a prosperous future.

Scarcely, however, had Louis taken the reins of government, than the prospect was clouded by the insubordination of the Count of Champagne and the pretensions of the Pope. Louis, not daunted by the league which they formed, mounted his war-horse and set out to maintain his authority. But the expedition terminated in a tragical event, which seemed to change the King's nature. While besieging Vitey, he cruelly set fire to a church, in which the inhabitants had taken refuge; and having burned the edifice, with thirteen hundred human beings within its walls, he experienced such remorse, that for some time afterwards, he had hardly courage sufficient to look upon the face of day.

The tragical scene was ever present to the young King's memory; and while still brooding painfully over the crime, news of the fall of Edessa reached France. The idea of pacifying his conscience by a new crusade immediately occurred; and an assembly of barons and bishops was summoned to consider the project. This assembly submitted the propriety of such an enterprise to the Pope; and the Pope, after expressing approval, confided to St. Bernard the preaching of a new crusade.

Bernard, who was then Abbot of Clairvaux, and at the height of his fame, entered upon his mission with

zeal. Having, in the spring of 1146, convoked an assembly at Vezelay, he presented himself in the garb of an anchorite, and, on a hill outside the town, addressed an immense concourse, among whom figured the King and Queen of France, surrounded by barons and prelates. Never was orator more successful. Indeed, Bernard produced an impression hardly less marvellous than Peter the Hermit had done half a century earlier ; and, as he concluded, his audience raised the old cry of " God wills it ! "

While the hill-side was ringing with enthusiastic shouts, Louis, throwing himself on his knees, received the cross ; and Eleanor immediately followed her husband's example. Shouts of " The cross ! " " The cross ! " then rose on all hands ; and peers and peasants, bishops and burghers, rushing forward, cast themselves at Bernard's feet. Such was the demand, that the crosses provided for the occasion were quite insufficient. But Bernard, tearing up his vestments, got over the difficulty with a readiness that Boemund of Tarentum might have envied ; and the sacred emblem soon appeared on every shoulder.

Elate with the success of his oratory, Bernard travelled through France preaching the crusade ; and having in every city and province roused the enthusiasm of the populace, he repaired to Germany.

At that time, the crown of the empire of the West rested on the brow of Conrad the Third, but not quite so easily as he could have wished. In fact, the Ger-

man Cæsar had a formidable rival in the Duke of Bavaria, and felt the reverse of secure. When, therefore, Bernard reached Spire, and asked the Emperor to arm for the defence of the Holy Sepulchre, Conrad, who was holding a Diet, evinced no ardour for the enterprise.

“Consider,” he said, “the troubles in which the empire would be involved.”

“The Holy See,” said Bernard, “has placed you on the imperial throne, and knows how to support you there. If you defend God’s heritage, the Church will take care of yours.”

But still Conrad hesitated; and the preacher’s eloquence was exerted in vain. At length, one day when Bernard was saying mass before the Emperor and the princes and lords assembled at Spire, he paused in the midst of the service to expatiate on the guilt of those who refused to fight against Christ’s enemies; and produced such an effect while picturing the day of judgment, that Conrad’s hesitation vanished.

“I know what I owe to Christ,” he said, approaching with tears in his eyes to receive the cross, “and I swear to go where his service calls me.”

“This is a miracle!” exclaimed the peers and princes present, as they followed their sovereign’s example, and vowed to attend his steps.

Having gained over Conrad, the eloquent saint pursued his triumphs, and soon fired Germany with

zeal. When he returned to France and reported his success, preparations began in both countries; enthusiasm was general. Men of all ranks assumed the cross; and even women vowed to arm themselves with sword and lance, and took an oath to fight for the Holy Sepulchre.

It was arranged that Louis and Conrad should depart in the spring of 1147, and that the French and German armies should unite at Constantinople. When the time approached, all rushed eastward with the cry of "God wills it!" and every road was covered with pilgrims, on their way to the camps. Bernard must almost have felt some dismay at the effect of his eloquence. "Villages and castles are deserted," he wrote to the Pope, "and there are none left but widows and orphans, whose husbands and parents are still living."

CHAPTER IV.

MUCH BRUIT AND LITTLE FRUIT.

EARLY in the spring of 1147, Europe was in commotion. Everywhere in Germany and France, men were seen with the cross on their shoulders. Shepherds flung down their crooks, husbandmen abandoned their teams, traders quitted their booths, barons left their castles, and bishops deserted their bishoprics, to arm for the defence of the Holy Sepulchre. From England, exhausted by dynastic war, and Italy, agitated by ecclesiastical strife, bands of warriors issued to swell the armies of Conrad and Louis. Many ladies armed themselves for this crusade, and prepared to signalise their prowess under the leadership of a female warrior whose dress excited much admiration, and whose gilded boots procured her the name of "Goldenlegs."

At Ratisbon, about Easter, the Emperor of Germany assembled his warriors. Accompanied by a host of nobles, among whom were his brother Otho, Bishop of Frisigen; his nephew, Frederick Barbarossa, Duke of Suabia; the Marquis of Montferrat,

and the Duke of Bohemia, Conrad commenced his march eastward at the head of a hundred thousand men, and sent messengers to announce to the Emperor of the East the intention of the crusaders to cross the Greek territories.

At this period, Emanuel Comnenus reigned at Constantinople. Emanuel was grandson of Alexis, whose cunning had wrought the first crusaders so much annoyance, and quite equal in duplicity to his predecessor. On receiving Conrad's message, he returned an answer highly complimentary. But while professing great friendship for the new crusaders, he made all their movements known to the Saracens, and so managed matters that their march was frequently interrupted.

The elements appeared not less hostile to Conrad's army than the Greeks. While the Germans encamped to keep the Feast of Assumption, in a valley on the river Melas, a storm suddenly rose, and swelled so violently that horses, baggage, and tents were carried away. The crusaders, amazed and terrified, gathered themselves up; and, deploring their mishaps, pursued the way to Constantinople.

The Emperor of the East was not by any means overjoyed at seeing a rival Cæsar before his capital. Emanuel Comnenus showed, like his grandsire, some doubts of the crusaders' good faith; and would no doubt have manifested his antipathy more strongly, if Conrad's army had been less formidable. As it was,

the German Emperor did not meet with any temptation to prolong his visit. Instead, therefore, of awaiting the arrival of the French at Constantinople, Conrad made haste to cross the Bosphorus.

No sooner was Conrad on Asiatic soil, than the perfidy of the Greeks became manifest. Every city was fortified—every gate closed. Even provisions, for which the crusaders had prepared to pay, were obtained with difficulty; and Greek traders, while buying and selling, proved as dishonest as their Emperor. Before being supplied with meal, the Germans had to place money in a basket lowered from the ramparts; and the meal, after being obtained, was generally found to be adulterated with lime. Moreover, insult was added to injury: for, however grudgingly the Greeks furnished provisions, they were by no means sparing of ridicule.

But this was not the worst. The Greek guides, recommended to Conrad by Emanuel, proved treacherous in the extreme; and the Germans' line of march was so well known to the Saracens, that ambuscades awaited them in every defile, and stragglers were cut off at every turn. At length, when the crusaders reached the river Meander, the Moslems in great force awaited them on the opposite bank.

The Emperor and his men had grown so weary of marching side by side with treacherous friends, that they were not, perhaps, sorry to have courageous foes face to face. The river, however, had not the ap-

pearance of being fordable ; and the crusaders had a very slender prospect of coming to close conflict with their foes. Conrad, however, was not to be baffled. After exhorting them to do their duty, he gave the signal for dashing onward ; and the crusaders, urged to heroism, plunged boldly into the river. The consequence is said to have been somewhat startling to the foe. The stream, suddenly stopped by the multitude of men in bucklers, corslets, and steel brassets, seemed to stand still ; and the Saracens, astonished at seeing their enemies pass as if on dry land, concluded that they were aided by supernatural powers.

The crusaders, without delay, availed themselves of the effect produced ; and the Saracens were so amazed, that they had scarcely courage to make a struggle. The victory of the Germans was soon complete ; and the vanquished were killed in such numbers, that their bones long afterwards formed mounds along both banks of the river.

After this triumph, which perhaps inspired the Germans with an idea of invincibility, Conrad led them towards Iconium. But at this point his enemies were prepared for a desperate struggle. The Sultan of Iconium had assembled a mighty army to oppose the crusaders' passage ; and the Greek guides soon led the Emperor's soldiers into the Sultan's snare.

While Conrad and his men, near Laodicea, were toiling, under a burning sun, through narrow passes, turbans and spear-heads became visible on the moun-

tains ; and gradually a Moslem host appeared in view. The crusaders, pent up in defiles and encumbered with heavy armour, were in no condition to encounter such foes with success ; and the Saracens, making attacks with the velocity of hawks coming down on their prey, allowed them no rest. The crusaders suffered to such an intolerable degree, that corpses strewn their line of march ; and Conrad, finding that his army had gradually melted away, prepared to retreat. Escaping, more by good luck than good guidance, from the Saracens' pursuit, the Germans, reduced to a tenth of their original number, contrived to find their way to Constantinople.

Meanwhile, the King of France was in motion. About the Feast of Pentecost, Louis proceeded to the Abbey of St. Denis to take from the altar the national standard of France, which, from a staff of gold and a banner with edges shaped like flames, derived the name of "Oriflamme." Having received the oriflamme, and the abbot's permission to depart from the kingdom, Louis, accompanied by Queen Eleanor, with her ladies and troubadours, directed his course towards Metz, which had been appointed as a rendezvous, and, gathering into one great army at that place the forces which had come from all parts of France, he marched towards Constantinople.

On reaching Constantinople, about the beginning of October, Louis met with a reception infinitely more flattering than had been given to Conrad. Emanuel

was all politeness, and expressed the utmost friendship for the French warriors. At first they were deceived; but, ere long, intelligence that he was in regular alliance with the Saracens, roused their indignation. A council being held, many of the crusaders evinced their desire to seize Constantinople; but the more timid argued for moderation, and carried the day. Emanuel, however, feeling uneasy at their presence, spread reports that the Germans had gained great victories in the East, and the French, impatient to share the glory and the spoil, hastened across the Bosphorus.

Scarcely, however, had Louis and his comrades entered Bithynia, when news of Conrad's defeat reached them. The French, nevertheless, pursued their expedition with ardour, and ere long indulged in a dangerous feeling of security. The result was most unfortunate. On leaving Laodicea and entering the mountain passes, they found themselves exposed to precisely the same dangers which had destroyed Conrad's army; and one day, while they were entering a valley, and everything seemed so secure that everybody was in confusion, the Saracens suddenly appeared on the heights.

The crusaders were completely taken by surprise. The vanguard, under protection of which were the Queen and her ladies, was fortunately in a position to escape. But the main body, with which Louis marched, was encompassed with danger. Above, were



CONFLICT ON THE HEIGHTS NEAR LAODICEA.

Crusades and Crusaders.]

Saracens with "fierce faces threatening war;" beneath, steep precipices and yawning gulphs. The conflict was commenced by the Saracens. Rushing from the heights, with sound of clarion and drum and with fearful yells, they came down upon the pilgrim-army like a whirlwind. Having no room either to advance or retreat, the crusaders found their plight intolerable; and many, when pushed over the precipice, in a desperate effort to escape their fate dragged others into the abyss. Nothing could have surpassed the horrors of the scene, as masses of rock came crashing from the mountains on one side, and men and horses were hurled over the rocks on the other.

While all around was panic and despair, Louis, rallying some of his bravest knights, attempted to charge up the hill, and, after thirty nobles had fallen by his side, succeeded in reaching a mass of rock which projected itself midway. Perched on this ledge, with his back against a tree, the King had to withstand the attack of several Saracens. His fate seemed sealed. But luckily the assailants, unaware of his rank, and eager to participate in the spoil, left him as of no consequence; and Louis, escaping as if by miracle, mounted a stray horse, avoided countless perils, met at nightfall with some of his soldiers, and under their guidance rejoined his van.

This disaster was succeeded by others hardly less intolerable. As winter approached, the weather became so cold and rainy, that the prospects of the army

were gloomy in the extreme. All the horrors of the first crusade had to be endured ; and at length, when the crusaders, sick at heart, arrived at Attalia, they were famished and in rags.

Attalia was a city inhabited by Greeks, and governed by the Emperor of the East. Of course the reception of the crusaders was the reverse of cordial ; and Louis, encamping outside the walls, asked his nobles to decide what was to be done.

While the crusaders were discussing various plans, the Governor of Attalia sent to offer Louis vessels to convey him to a place of safety ; and Louis, accepting the offer, embarked with the queen, his lords, and what remained of his cavalry, and sailed for Antioch. The rest of the army, left to their fate, were in a most unenviable position. The Greeks declined to receive them into Attalia ; and they were in no condition to resist the Saracens. Some, rendered desperate, embraced the Mahometan religion ; the others, exhausted by hunger and fatigue, died by the swords of the Saracens.

It was the 19th of March, 1148, when Louis and Eleanor sailed for Antioch, which was then under the government of Raymond of Poitiers, Eleanor's uncle, a princely adventurer, who had made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and espoused the grand-daughter of Boemund of Tarentum. The King and Queen of France were warmly welcomed by Raymond, and the crusaders soon forgot, in a gay and brilliant court, the

hardships they had endured, and the comrades they had abandoned. The city at that time boasted of the presence of many high dames celebrated for their beauty. Eleanor, however, eclipsed them all; and she appears to have evinced so strong a desire for admiration, and carried her flirtation so far beyond the bounds of propriety, that Louis became jealous, and bore her off to Jerusalem.

On reaching the Holy City, whither Conrad had already repaired in the guise of a pilgrim, Louis was welcomed with enthusiasm. Princes, prelates, and people sallied forth from the gates to meet him; and his arrival was hailed with loud shouts of "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Baldwin the Third was naturally anxious to make the most of the presence of a King and an Emperor; and, anxious with their assistance to undertake some great enterprise, the young Sovereign convoked an assembly at Acre to deliberate on the affairs of his kingdom. Louis and Conrad repaired thither; and the assembly resolved on besieging Damascus. Accordingly, in June, 1149, a Christian army, commanded by the Emperor of Germany and the Kings of France and Jerusalem, and preceded by the Patriarch bearing the cross, marched to Damascus, and took possession of the gardens and orchards outside the city.

The siege was forthwith commenced, and the crusaders entertained high hopes of success. At first, indeed, they carried all before them, and displayed a

degree of valour which would have done honour to the earlier pilgrim princes ; but no sooner did triumph seem almost certain, than they began to dispute as to the person on whom the besieged city was to be bestowed when won, and discord soon pervaded the camp. The King and the Emperor proposed to give Damascus to Thierry, Count of Flanders ; while the Syrian barons deemed that the prize should fall to one of their number.

The discord in the camp of the besiegers was not unknown to the commander of the besieged. This man, Ayoub, the founder of a famous dynasty, took advantage of the discord in the enemy's camp ; and addressed threats and promises to the Syrian barons with so much effect, that the crusaders, under their influence, hesitated, changed their point of attack, and ultimately abandoned their enterprise in despair.

After this unfortunate expedition, the idea of besieging Ascalon was suggested to the crusaders ; but neither Louis nor Conrad gave encouragement to the project. Both were, in fact, anxious to leave the East ; and the King of France, embarking at Acre, reached his capital in the autumn, with a mere fragment of his brilliant army. From that time, Louis appeared more like a monk than a monarch ; and Eleanor, indignant at the weakness he displayed, had her marriage dissolved on the plea of relationship, and separating herself from the husband of her youth,

carried with her as her dowry the magnificent province of Aquitaine.

Louis was not sorry to get rid of Eleanor. He affected to suspect that, at Antioch, she had shown a criminal regard for a young Turk, named Saladin; and had credulity enough to believe that a woman who lay under such a suspicion would, even though heiress of Aquitaine, be scorned by any Christian prince. Scarcely, however, had Eleanor, after leaving Paris, arrived at Blois, when the Count of that province attempted to wed her by force; but, favoured by fortune, she escaped down the Seine. At Tours, the Count of Anjou, with matrimonial intent, lay in wait to intercept her; but, warned in time, the divorced Queen avoided the ambush. At Poitiers, however, she found a wooer to her liking. At that place, Henry Plantagenet presented himself, and he, being accomplished and handsome, was treated with favour. It is true that Henry was Eleanor's junior by a few years; but she, overlooking the objection of age, submitted a second time to the conjugal yoke, and at once bestowed her hand and the duchy of Aquitaine on the ambitious heir to the English crown.

Such was the expedition known as "The Second Crusade," preached by St. Bernard, and led by Conrad and Louis. "The French proverb," says Fuller, "was verified of this voyage—'Much bruit and little fruit.'"

CHAPTER V.

THE HOSPITALLERS AND THE TEMPLARS

AT the time when Conrad and Louis visited Jerusalem, the defence of the Holy Sepulchre did not devolve wholly upon King Baldwin and the Christian barons of the East. Ever and anon, before the eyes of pilgrims, men with bronzed visages, athletic forms, muscular limbs, wearing long mantles over their chain mail, and mounted on choice steeds, swept along with the air of warriors, who desired nothing so much as foes to conquer. These were the Knights of the Temple, and the Knights of the Hospital of St. John, who assumed a haughty superiority toward their compeers, and boasted that their orders formed the bulwark of the kingdom of Jerusalem.

The Templars and the Knights of St. John had not originally aspired to be what they now appeared. Notwithstanding the high pretensions and defiant bearing of the "military monks," both orders had sprung from obscurity. Before becoming warriors, they had been simple almsmen; and they whose wealth and power rendered them objects of

awe, had originally rejoiced in their poverty and humility.

It appears that, long ere the crusades began, some Italian merchants founded an hospital, dedicated to St. John of Jerusalem, the brethren of which consecrated their lives to the service of pilgrims and the poor. As time passed on, however, the hospital increased in wealth, erected stately buildings, and sent forth, under the auspices of a grand-master, champions to contend with Pagan and Turk. The Knights of St. John wore over their mail a black mantle, on which appeared five crosses, in memory of the five wounds of Christ, and a red belt with a white cross. Moreover, they took the oath of poverty and chastity, and vowed to succour and sustain all pilgrims to the Holy Sepulchre.

Some years after the institution of the Hospital-ers of St. John, a rival order sprang into existence. Several persons assembled near the spot where Solomon's Temple was believed to have stood, and, dedicating themselves by a solemn oath to the defence of pilgrims coming to Jerusalem, formed the order of the Temple of Zion. Like the Hospitallers, the Templars vowed themselves to chastity and poverty; and, indeed, paraded their penury by taking for their seal two knights riding on one horse, and offering their swords and belts as the only ransom they could afford to pay when taken by the Saracens. They wore, over their armour, a long white mantle, on the

shoulder of which was a red cross, and they assumed a banner, half black and half white, to intimate that while fair and candid to Christians, they were black and terrible to unbelievers.

The two great monastic orders, which thus sprung up in the Holy Land, were not open to all comers. Their constitution, indeed, appears to have been most aristocratic; and high qualifications were required. It was necessary, to become a knight of either order, that the aspirant should have reached the age of eighteen; that his birth should be legitimate; that his blood should be gentle; that he should be of a vigorous frame and of a noble presence. These rules did not, of course, apply to the priests, or servants of the order, but doubtless, in the case of the knights, they were strictly enforced.

But there was little danger of any lack of candidates. In an age when the union of the military spirit with the religious spirit was so strong, the life led by the Templars and Hospitallers could hardly fail to recommend itself to youthful patricians who inherited nothing but the courage and piety of their fathers. In fact, they could hardly have imagined any career more in accordance with their ideas than that now presented. Accordingly, no sooner did the renown of the Templars and Knights of St. John spread itself over Europe, than almost every illustrious family sent a cadet to swell their ranks. Such men, picked from the flower of Europe's nobility,

naturally fought with courage and died with dignity ; and they rendered themselves terrible to foes on every field where Christian and Moslem met in the shock of war. In close conflict they were the most formidable of champions. At the cry of battle, they armed “with faith within and steel without,” and professed their pride to conquer and their happiness to die for the Christian cause.

For many years after their institution, the conduct of the Templars and Knights of St. John was worthy of all praise. But, as time passed over, they yielded to the baneful influence of overgrown wealth. Every victory gave them new possessions in Asia ; and admirers in every nation in Europe granted them lands. Ere long the military monks became potent as sovereign princes ; and their banners waved over countless cities, villages, and provinces. Gradually they gave less attention to the defence of the Holy Sepulchre, than to augmenting the wealth and glory of their orders, and exchanged their original humility and poverty for displays of the arrogance and ostentation destined to involve them in ruin.

CHAPTER VI.

AFFAIRS OF THE EAST.

SOON after the King of France and the Emperor of Germany sailed from Acre, Baldwin the Third, having meantime taken the city of Asealon, died from the effects of poison administered by a Syrian physician, and left the kingdom of Jerusalem to his brother, Almerie, in a condition the reverse of satisfactory.

Exposed to an eastern climate, and yielding to oriental effeminacy, the Christians of the East had rapidly degenerated. Within the Holy City, they had abandoned themselves to vicious indulgence.

This was not all. The warriors of the cross set at defiance the doctrines of chivalry as well as Christianity, and held themselves free from keeping faith with infidels. Forgetting that the best evidence to give of the superiority of a religion consists in the respect shone by its professors for virtue and truth, they not only indulged in gross vice, but broke faith without scruple.

The Christians would have fallen an easy prey to their foes, if, strangely enough, the Saracens had

not been in almost as wretched a state as their adversaries. For centuries the Caliph of Cairo and the Caliph of Bagdad, one representing the Fatimites, the other the Abassides, were implacable enemies. Each claimed to be the vicar of Mahomet, and denounced his rival as the enemy of God. In the mosques of Cairo, the name of the Caliph of Bagdad was daily cursed; and in the mosques of Bagdad that of the Caliph of Cairo was exposed to a similar indignity. It is true, that both Caliphs remained for ever shut up from the public, and possessed no real power; but, as the chiefs of Islamism, their names were still of high account, and used without scruple by ambitious emirs to promote their own interests and advance their own fortunes.

It happened that, in 1165, while Elhadaek, Caliph of Cairo, was passing his life in a seraglio, pursuing sinful pleasures and indulging in voluptuous léthargy, two Saracen chiefs, Dargan and Sanor, contended for the viceroyalty of his empire. When this strife was at its height, Sanor entreated aid from Noureddin, who having, in other days, wrested Edessa from the ill-fated Joceline de Courtenay, had since advanced himself to the dignity of Sultan of Damascus; and Noureddin, with a keen eye to his own interest, despatched to Sanor's aid a powerful army, under the command of Syracon, a captain of experience and valour.

Undismayed by the arrival of so renowned a war-

rior, Dargan mustered an army, and boldly marched to meet the troops of Noureddin. The result was more fortunate for him than might have been expected. In a battle fought, he came off the victor, and seemed to have fortune on his side. But soon after his victory, Dargan was slain by treachery, and Sanor, profiting by his rival's death, immediately became sultan.

So far all went smoothly. But Sanor now became alarmed at the attitude assumed by the army whose aid he had invoked. In fact, Syracon, instead of returning to Damascus, seized Belbeis, on the Nile, fortified that city, and awaited the arrival of troops to undertake the conquest of Egypt.

Sanor was naturally indignant at the perfidy of his auxiliary. Finding himself outwitted, he looked around for new allies, and bethought him of those Christian warriors whose feats of valour had astonished the East, and whose mighty arms and barbed steeds, charging in close ranks, had ever borne down opposition. Accordingly, he hastened to send imploring messages to the King of Jerusalem; and Almeric, appearing with an army in Egypt, after a tough struggle, rendered Sanor victorious over his enemies.

But Syracon was not the man to yield easily to adversity. He knew that the Caliph of Bagdad contended with the Caliph of Cairo for the heirship of the Prophet and the sovereignty over all Moslems, and

resolved to turn their rivalry to account. No sooner, therefore, was he defeated than he repaired to Damascus, and induced Nouredin to assure the Caliph of Bagdad that, if properly supported, he would make all Egypt subject to the authority of the Abassides. The Caliph gladly gave his sanction to the project; and Syracon, at the head of a mighty host of warriors, descended upon Egypt.

On hearing of the projected invasion, Sanor was astounded. Recovering from his surprise, however, he sent to the King of Jerusalem, imploring him to front the new peril, and offering a pension of forty thousand ducats. Almeric was not unwilling to undertake the task on such terms. Not liking, however, to depend on the promises of one who was merely viceroy, he insisted on treating with the Caliph; and Sanor, finding that the Christian King's resolution on this point was not to be shaken, consented that ambassadors should be sent to confer with the vicar of Mahomet.

For this important mission, Hugh, Earl of Ceserea, and a knight of the Temple, were selected; and, accompanied by Sanor, they repaired to Cairo. On reaching that city, they dismounted from their steeds, and were conducted to the palace, within whose precincts no Christian had ever before set foot, guided through dark passages guarded by Ethiopians, and thence into courts so richly and beautifully ornamented that they could not refrain from expressing admiration. "The

farther we went," said they, "the greater was the splendour and state."

At length the ambassadors reached the chamber where, behind a traverse wrought with pearls, the Caliph was seated in all his dignity. On entering this sanctuary, Sanor gave intimation of his presence, and thrice prostrated himself on the ground. The curtain was then drawn, and the Caliph discovered sitting, with serene majesty, on a throne of gold, surrounded by the officers of his court, who appeared both grieved and surprised to see Christians standing in that place and presence.

The Earl and the Templar regarded the spectacle presented to them with mingled astonishment and awe; but Sanor was quite at home, and humbly kissed the Caliph's foot. Kneeling before the golden throne, he explained why the ambassadors were there, expatiated on the danger to which the empire was exposed, explained the treaty into which he had entered with King Almeric, and begged the Caliph to ratify the conditions by giving his hand. The Caliph, however, hesitated about descending so much from his dignity, and, after expressing some objections, offered his glove. But the ambassadors shook their heads; and Hugh of Ceserea spoke. "Sir," said the Earl, "truth makes no holes to hide itself. Princes, if they would covenant, must deal fairly and openly. Give me, therefore, your hand: for I will make no bargain with your glove." Yielding

to necessity, the Caliph consented to the humiliation of allowing the ambassadors to touch his hand; and they were soon after dismissed with rich gifts.

By this time the King of Jerusalem had approached Cairo with his army; and, matters having been satisfactorily arranged, he worsted Syracon in a battle fought in the isle of Maalle. The victory, however, did not prove quite decisive, and the struggle was maintained with varying success for many months. Ultimately Syracon, having obtained an honourable capitulation, led his army from Egypt. Almeric also took his departure, and conducted his warriors, laden with gold, back to Jerusalem.

Almeric had so far succeeded, in the pursuit of glory and gold. Unfortunately for his welfare, the Christian King was not content with the laurels and the ducats he had. Having seen Egypt sufficiently to be aware of the wealth of the country and the weakness of its government, he panted for possession, and sent ambassadors to Emanuel, Emperor of Constantinople, whose daughter he had espoused, entreating assistance in a great scheme of conquest. Emanuel approved of Almeric's views, and promised to aid him with a powerful fleet.

Encouraged in his project, Almeric, in 1168, determined to defy his treaty with the Caliph, and undertake the invasion of Egypt. The idea was not received with universal favour. Many of the wisest Christian warriors opposed the enterprise, and the

Grand Master of the Temple loudly protested against a breach of faith. But Almeric, who was strongly supported by the Knights of St. John, held steadily to his purpose; and, placing himself at the head of his army, reached the banks of the Nile, besieged and took Belbeis, and after pillaging the city, consigned it to the flames.

But while the King of Jerusalem had been preparing for the conquest of Egypt, the same project had occupied the thoughts of the Sultan of Damascus. Syracon, in fact, had impressed his master with the conviction that the Fatimites were on the verge of ruin, and the Egyptians ripe for new governors. Nouredin listened with gratification to the suggestions of his general, and was already occupied with schemes for possessing himself of Egypt, when the Caliph, alarmed at Almeric's invasion, implored assistance to repel the enemies of the Prophet. The Sultan of Damascus received the Caliph's message with joy; and, at his bidding, Syracon, at the head of a numerous army, crossed the desert and appeared on the banks of the Nile.

Almeric was wholly unprepared for the presence of such a foe. In Sanor, the King of Jerusalem had met his match at the game of deceit. By sending to implore pity, and offering two millions of golden crowns, Sanor had thrown the invader off his guard. While waiting for the promised treasure, and vainly expecting the Greek fleet, Almeric gave the Egyptians an

opportunity of fortifying their cities and preparing to bid him defiance ; and he only awoke to the consciousness of having been deluded, when he learned that Syracon was approaching at the head of a formidable force.

On comprehending his position, Almeric roused himself to action, and, eager to repair his error, hastened to offer Syracon battle. But the Moslem warrior, having no inclination to gratify the wish of the Christian King, declined the honour of an engagement till he had formed a junction with the Egyptians. Almeric, unprepared to cope with the united armies, was fain to retreat ; and, having been pursued to the verge of the desert, he returned to Jerusalem.

Nevertheless, Almeric could not divest himself of an ambition to figure as conqueror of Egypt. The aspiration having become part of himself, he repaired to Constantinople to beg the Emperor's assistance in realising the grand project. Emanuel welcomed his son-in-law with imperial magnificence, and was lavish of promises. But nothing was ever done in the way of performance ; and Almeric returned to the Holy City to mourn his blighted hopes. The project was still haunting Almeric's brain, when he died, leaving his subjects in distress to defend a menaced kingdom, and a son in boyhood to inherit a tottering throne.

Meanwhile Syracon had entered Cairo in triumph, hoisted Noureddin's banner on the towers and ramparts, and been welcomed by the Caliph as a deliverer.

Noureddin, finding himself master of Egypt, Syria, and the richest provinces of the East, was preparing to crown his successes with the annihilation of the Christians, and the capture of the Holy City. The Sultan of Damascus caused prayers to be offered for the success of the expedition, and even constructed, with his own hands, a pulpit to be placed in one of the chief mosques of Jerusalem. Death, however, surprised Noureddin in the midst of his preparations, and for a brief period averted the perils that threatened the Christian states.

CHAPTER VII.

SALADIN THE GREAT.

WHEN Nouredin expired, the vast empire of which he had been master, was in no small danger of dismemberment. The only son of the departed Sultan was a child incapable of defending his hereditary dominions; the emirs, each eager to turn the crisis to his own advantage, began to quarrel about a division of power; and a relapse to chaos appeared inevitable. Terrified at the prospect of discord, disorder, and civil war, the Moslem nations recognised with joy the claims of a warrior, who possessed courage and intellect to deal with the circumstances, and to pursue those projects on which the heart of Nouredin had been set.

Saladin was descended from the races inhabiting the mountains beyond the Tigris, and was the son of that Ayoub, who defended Damascus against the Christian army led by the Emperor of Germany and the Kings of France and Jerusalem. But though brought up under the eye of his father, and taught from his cradle to appreciate achievements of valour

and genius, Saladin, in youth, devoted so little attention to war or politics, and gave so much time to pleasure and dissipation, that no one regarded him as capable of attaining to greatness. It would indeed have been difficult to imagine the son of Ayoub destined to inflict a mortal blow on the Christian kingdom in the East, and to maintain the Moslem power against the bravest emperors and kings of Christendom.

The first warlike expedition in which Saladin figured, was one of those undertaken by Syracon to the banks of the Nile. The young warrior did not return to Damascus without having proved his courage; but the hardships of a camp life were understood to be little to his liking. When ordered by Nouredin to go back to Egypt, he did not obey without hesitation and murmurs. "I go," said he, yielding to necessity; "but with the despair of a man led to execution."

Fortune, however, seemed resolved on making Saladin great in spite of himself. The death of Syracon rendered the post of vizier vacant; and the Caliph, imagining Saladin incapable of usurpation, nominated him to the post. No sooner did this happen than a marvellous change came over his life. Hitherto he had been a young warrior given to indolence and dissipation. Now he appeared in a new character. Neglecting no means of increasing his influence, he won the esteem of the imans by his austerity, and

the favour of the soldiers by his munificence. Ere long, he ventured upon an important step. By killing the Caliph of Cairo with his horse-mace, he extinguished the Fatimites and made the Caliph of Bagdad head of all Moslems. For this service, Saladin was congratulated by the chief of the Abasides, and presented with a vest of honour.

Saladin now had his name mentioned in the public prayers; and daily extended his power in the East. His position, however, was not quite secure. Indeed, Nouredin became jealous of the young Viceroy; and Saladin would probably have fallen a victim. But at that crisis Nouredin died; and Saladin, setting aside the Sultan's heir, ascended the throne of Egypt, and prepared for war with the kingdom of Jerusalem.

The kingdom thus menaced by the armies of Saladin, was in no condition to resist. Decay was visible on every side; discord reigned on all hands; discipline was almost at an end; law was openly set at defiance; and authority could not make itself felt. Every count or baron, secure in his strong castle on the summit of a mountain or in the cavern of a rock, held the royal power in contempt. The merchants of Venice and Genoa, who frequented the maritime cities, were at daggers-drawn. The knights of the Temple and the Hospital were at deadly feud; and both orders were at variance with the ecclesiastics, whom they frequently chased into the church of the Holy Sepulchre. Religion had

lost influence over the lives of men ; and the clergy neither strove to restore concord nor to set an example of virtue.

But it was in the capital of the Christian kingdom that matters had reached the worst stage. In the Holy City decorum was utterly disregarded ; and the lives of some of the clergy were more scandalous than those of their neighbours. Chiefs and churchmen were equally abandoned ; and dames and damsels of all ranks kept them in countenance. " Sin," says Fuller, " reigned in every corner, and there was scarce one honest woman in the whole of Jerusalem." Neither royal rank, nor ecclesiastical dignity, restrained their possessors from the prevailing immorality. The widow of the third Baldwin indulged in a criminal intrigue with Andronicus, who afterwards, on the throne of Constantinople, became notorious for his cruelties ; and Heraclius, the Patriarch, was on such terms with Pascha de Rivera, wife of a vintner, that, at church and market, she wore ornaments purchased with the alms of the faithful, and enjoyed, far and wide, the title of " the Patriarchess."

It is true, that in the midst of profligacy and irreligion, the warriors of the cross preserved that courage, which had so often rendered them formidable to foes. But they were at variance with each other, incapable alike of commanding or obeying, and disinclined to brave hardships or bear fatigues.

Baldwin the Fourth, son of Almeric, was a youth of feeble health, totally incapable of dealing with the difficulties with which his throne was encompassed; and a fierce dispute about the regency divided the kingdom of Jerusalem against itself. At length Raymond, Count of Tripoli, became master of the situation, and undertook an expedition to Egypt. The enterprise proved unsuccessful, and would have ended in utter disaster. Luckily, however, for the Christians, Saladin was then in perplexity, and consented to a truce. So far they escaped the consequences of their imprudence, and had reason to congratulate themselves on their good fortune. But, untaught by experience, the Christians had the indiscretion to violate the truce; and Saladin, assembling an army, advanced upon Palestine, and ravaged the country.

The fate of the kingdom of Jerusalem now appeared to be sealed; Baldwin, apprehending the worst, shut himself up in Ascalon, and Saladin, already anticipating victory, was distributing the cities among his emirs, when despair gave to the endangered Christians a dauntless degree of courage. Availing himself of the prevalent enthusiasm, Baldwin led his army from the city, and attacked the Moslem warriors with such impetuosity, that resistance was impossible. In vain did Saladin fight valiantly in the midst of his Mamelukes; the whole Moslem army was swept away, and the Sultan had the utmost difficulty in escaping across the desert.

Baldwin and his barons were now elate with success ; but their joy was of brief duration. Saladin disdained the idea of acknowledging himself vanquished. Ere long, he again made his appearance at the head of a new army, and, rendered cautious by experience, carried on the war to such advantage, that Baldwin was fain to solicit a truce. Saladin, imagining, perhaps, that he had taught his foes a lesson, consented ; and peace was restored. But in the kingdom of Jerusalem, such was the absence of order, that no man could answer for the truce being maintained ; and, as events proved, one man, by breaking it, could involve the Christian states in fearful calamities.

It appears that among the warriors who followed the banner of Louis of France to the East, was a young man, with a comely face and a handsome person, known as Reginald de Chatillon. Romantic, adventurous, and with no particular temptation to return to Europe, Reginald remained in Asia, and taking service with Raymond of Poitiers, Prince of Antioch, became celebrated for his chivalrie bravery. Meanwhile, Raymond of Poitiers died in a battle with the Saracens ; and his widow, Constance, was eagerly pressed to bestow her hand on some prince or noble, worthy of being associated with her in the government during her son's minority. But the granddaughter of Boemund of Tarentum, who naturally had a will of her own, passed over the claims of a

host of princely suitors to unite her fate with that of Reginald.

Elevated by the love of a woman to the throne of Antioch, Reginald adopted the policy of the princes whose heiress she was, declared war against the Sultan of Damascus and the Empire of Constantinople, and proved himself formidable alike to Greek and Saracen. Taken prisoner, however, he was carried to Aleppo, and there lay in chains for years. On recovering liberty, he found that Constance of Antioch slept with her fathers, and that Boemund, her eldest son, having come to years, occupied the throne.

Finding his principality gone, Reginald resolved on restoring his fortunes by a second dash at matrimony, and espoused the widow of the Lord of Carac. With this lady he obtained some castles, situated between Palestine and Arabia, and had begun to prey upon the Moslem territories, when the Christians concluded the truce with Saladin.

Reginald, disinclined to abandon a system which he expected would prove profitable, paid no attention to the truce. While continuing his depredations, he happened to capture a caravan, with which was the mother of Saladin, on her way from Egypt to Damascus. The consequences were most unfortunate. Saladin, after complaining to Baldwin, and finding that the King could afford him no redress, seized fifteen hundred pilgrims on the Egyptian coast, and announced his intention of renewing hostilities.

At this eventful period, Baldwin was succeeded by the son of his sister Sybil. But the young King, who was a mere infant, soon died so suddenly that he was thought to have had foul play, and Guy de Lusignan, Count of Joppa, and husband of Sybil, ascended the throne, to which his wife was heiress. But the talents of the Count of Joppa, who was of the great family of Lusignan, in Poictou, were not considered of the highest order ; and his elevation did not give general satisfaction. Even Geoffrey de Lusignan, the brother of Guy, whom chroniclers describe as “ a man of the most approved valour,” heard of the proceeding with surprise. “ What !” exclaimed Geoffrey, “ Guy King of Jerusalem ! Why, the men who think him worthy to be obeyed, did they but know me, would deem me worthy to be worshipped. They would make a god of me.”

Nevertheless Guy assumed the functions of royalty, and determined to encounter the army of Saladin. Preparations were accordingly made ; and, after some skirmishing, the King and the Sultan met in the neighbourhood of Tiberias, which Saladin had carried by assault. The Saracens were infinitely superior in number ; but the Christian warriors were animated by a degree of fiery valour, which rendered them formidable antagonists, and at the break of a July day, the battle commenced. The Christians, headed by their King, displayed great bravery ; and, inspired by the sight of the true cross, which was borne by

the Bishop of Acre, they performed prodigies of valour.

Night parted the combatants; but next day the struggle was renewed, and the Christians again fought with signal valour. Saladin, however, set fire to the grass that covered the plain, and the warriors of the cross, surrounded and scorched by the flames, fell into disorder. Nevertheless they fought furiously, and, with lance in rest, charged through clouds of smoke. But their onset proved vain; the true cross was taken; and the knights, uttering cries of horror, rushed with desperation on the weapons of their foes. The battle became a rout. Raymond of Tripoli, who had done his duty valiantly, with the Prince of Antioch and a small number of warriors, cut a way through the Saracens, and galloped from the field. But for the others there was no escape. King Guy, Geoffrey de Lusignan, Reginald de Chatillon, the Grand Master of the Temple, and the most renowned knights in Palestine, were made prisoners, and conducted to the tent of the victor. Guy was treated with kindness, but Reginald de Chatillon was immediately stabbed; and the Templars and Hospitallers were next day publicly executed.

Saladin now proceeded on his victorious career. Acre, after a siege of two days, yielded to his summons; and Ceserea, Jaffa, and Arsuf, with many other cities, shared Acre's fate. Ascalon alone offered a brave resistance; and the inhabitants positively re-

fused to yield, come what might, unless Saladin would consent to set Guy de Lusignan at liberty. The Sultan, not without admiration of their loyalty, consented to liberate the captive King ere the close of the year. But there was every probability, that, ere the year expired, Guy would be a king without a kingdom and without a capital; for as the autumn of 1187 advanced, Saladin, having taken Gaza, led his victorious army over the heights of Emmaus, and displayed his standards before the gates of Jerusalem.

Within the walls of Jerusalem, a hundred thousand human beings, most of them fugitives from the conquered provinces, were congregated. But the Holy City was almost without defenders. The inhabitants were in despair; and an eclipse of the sun, which suddenly produced utter darkness, appeared in their eyes a fearful presage. Nevertheless they prepared for defence; and under the command of Baleau d'Ibelin, an aged warrior, repaired their fortifications, and even ventured on a sortie. But, repulsed, they returned within the walls, carrying with them dismay and consternation.

One hope yet remained. The Sultan might not be indisposed to show clemency to those who were defenceless; and the discovery of a plot for surrendering, tended much to increase the desire to capitulate. Under these circumstances, Baleau d'Ibelin, accompanied by the principal citizens, proceeded to the Sultan's tent, and proposed to surrender on certain con-

ditions. Saladin, however, was inexorable. "How," said he, "can you ask me to grant conditions to a city which is already taken?"

These words restored to the Christians the energy of enthusiasm. "If," said Baleau, "you can give us no hope of mercy, you will taste the fruits of our despair. Jerusalem contains five thousand Moslem captives, who shall all perish. We will slay our wives and children to prevent them becoming your slaves; and when we have reduced the Holy City to a heap of ruins, we will march out, armed with fire and sword, and no Christian will ascend to paradise without having consigned ten Moslems to hell."

The speech of the old warrior had its effect on the Sultan, and the citizens were requested to come back on the following day. Saladin then intimated his readiness to accept their terms, and agreed to a capitulation. All the warriors in Jerusalem were allowed to withdraw to Tripoli or Tyre. The inhabitants were granted their lives, and allowed to purchase their liberty. Those who could not, remained in slavery; and it appears that this was the fate of sixteen thousand.

When the day on which the Christians were to leave Jerusalem arrived, all the gates of the city, save that of St. David, were shut; and the Sultan, seated on a throne, saw them pass before him. The Patriarch, accompanied by the clergy, bearing the treasures of the church, headed the procession. Next

appeared the Queen, attended by knights and warriors; and following her a multitude of men and women, carrying their children and supporting their aged relatives, and all uttering cries of distress. Saladin, touched with the spectacle, addressed words of consolation to the Queen, and promised to soften the lot of such of her subjects as were left behind.

This ceremony over, the Sultan formally entered Jerusalem as a conqueror, preceded by his banners and surrounded by his imans. All the churches were by his orders converted into mosques; and in the vestibule of Omar's mosque, which he caused to be sprinkled with rose-water brought from Damascus, he placed the pulpit that Noureddin had constructed. The cross was removed with ignominy; the holy places resounded with praises of the founder of the Moslem faith, and from the summit of the minarets the muezzin, after sunset, proclaimed, "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CONFERENCE OF GISORS.

THE news of Saladin the Great having taken Jerusalem, filled Europe with surprise and consternation. The Pope, on receiving intelligence of the calamity, died of grief; priests journeyed from place to place, describing the plight of the Holy Sepulchre, trampled under the hoofs of horses; and Christians of the West forgot their own troubles to bewail the woes of the Christians of the East.

It had for some time been evident that the kingdom of Jerusalem could not be saved without aid from the warriors of Europe; and William, Archbishop of Tyre, author of a history of the Holy War, left the East to preach a crusade. After rousing the Italians, and persuading Frederick Barbarossa, the great Emperor of Germany, to take the cross, William of Tyre pressed onward to try his powers of persuasion on the sovereigns of England and France.

Henry Plantagenet and Philip Augustus were then at war. Nevertheless, a conference was appointed to take place on a plain near Gisors, and thither the King

of England, then in his fifty-sixth year, and the King of France, not yet thirty, came to meet the Archbishop, with companies of knights, barons, and princes, all eager to hear tidings from the East, and none of them disinclined to encounter the infidel.

After reaching the ground, and presenting himself to the assembly, the Archbishop read the warriors an account of the fall of Jerusalem; he then delivered an eloquent address, reproaching them for not having gone to save Christ's heritage, and exhorting them to hasten to its rescue. His eloquence proved most effective. Henry and Philip, embracing in presence of the assembled warriors, agreed to suspend their quarrels to combat the enemies of Christ; and from all present arose shouts of "The cross!" "The cross!"

The cry thus raised around an elm-tree on the plain of Gisors, where a church was soon after built to commemorate the scene, was carried from city to city, and from province to province. The old spirit, in fact, revived—mothers urged their sons, and wives urged their husbands, to devote themselves to the Holy War; and persons suspected of a wish to hang back, received a distaff and wool, as a significant hint that whoever declined would forfeit his title to be recognised as a man. At the same time, in order to defray the cost of the enterprise, a council of prelates and princes condemned all who did not take the cross to contribute a tithe of their revenues; and this tax,

from the alarm associated with the name of the great Sultan, soon came to be described as "the Saladin tenth."

William of Tyre could now indulge in some hope for Jerusalem. The three most potent of the European sovereigns—those of Germany, England, and France—had pledged themselves to fight for the Holy Sepulchre, and all their subjects were astir with excitement and bustle. The expedition, indeed, met with some checks. Ere preparations were well begun, war broke out again in Europe; and ere they were completed, Henry, worn out with war and weary with thought, breathed his last at Chinon, and was succeeded by his eldest surviving son, Richard Cœur de Lion. The crusade, however, cannot be said to have suffered by the substitution of the son for the father. What was lost in wisdom was gained in vigour. Cœur de Lion had been among the first to take the cross at Gisors, and of all those who placed the sacred badge on their shoulder, he was the most enthusiastic and eager. Palestine, in fact, had become Richard's one idea; and English armourers were forging for him a ponderous battle-axe, and working twenty pounds of steel into the head of the weapon, that he might therewith break the bones of Saracens.

CHAPTER IX.

FREDERICK BARBAROSSA.

WHILE, in England and France, warriors were girding on their armour for the crusade, Frederick, Emperor of Germany, the hero of forty fights in Europe, took the cross, and prepared to strike a blow in Asia for the Holy Sepulchre.

Frederick Barbarossa was nephew of the Emperor Conrad, who had enacted so conspicuous a part in the crusade preached by St. Bernard. At that time, in the vigour of youth, and unmoved by the tears of his father, the Duke of Suabia, who earnestly implored him to remain at home, Frederick had accompanied his imperial uncle, and signalised his prowess in the skirmishes with which the unfortunate enterprise commenced. After the death of Conrad, in 1152, he ascended the throne and entered upon his career.

At the beginning of his reign, Frederick was encompassed with difficulty; and the Pope was by no means in a humour to smoothe the Emperor's way. In fact, Adrian the Fourth, originally known as Nicholas Breakspeare, an English mendicant, refused

to perform the ceremony of coronation without imposing a condition hard to bear. "You must," said the Pope, "prove yourself a faithful son of the church by holding my stirrup while I mount my mule." Frederick reluctantly consented; and the Pope and his mule met publicly in the great square of Viterbo, a town surrounded by walls built by the last of the Lombard kings. All was going smoothly; but the Emperor purposely mistook the stirrup. "I have yet," he remarked with a sneer; "I have yet to learn the business of a groom."

Having settled the affairs of Germany, Frederick Barbarossa applied his energies to the reduction of Italy. The task was most difficult, and appeared endless. The Milanese, in particular, proved most refractory; and, supported by the Pope, they maintained so long and arduous a struggle, as to keep the Emperor perpetually in his harness.*

Forty years had passed since Frederick accompanied Conrad to the East; and the great Emperor had reached the age of threescore and ten, and become famous as the most illustrious personage in Europe. A man of ordinary height, with broad shoulders, and

* "Kaiser Friedrich," says Mr. Carlyle, "had immense difficulties with his Popes, with his Milanese, and the like; besieged Milan six times over, among other anarchies; had, indeed, a heavily-laden, hard time of it, his task being great and the greatest. He made Gebhardus, the anarchic governor of Milan, lie chained under his table, like a dog, for three days."—*History of Friedrich the Second*.

a manly form, a red beard, hair partly gray, prominent eyelids, short and wide cheeks, an expression indicating remarkable firmness of mind—speaking German, though not ignorant of other languages—such was Frederick Barbarossa, when, “at seventy years of age, having one foot in the grave,” he set out once more to combat the infidel.

After sending a declaration of war to Saladin, and receiving from the Sultan a haughty defiance, Frederick set up his standard at Mayence; and, having been joined by Leopold, Duke of Austria, and other princes of the empire, he marched, with his second son, the Duke of Suabia, towards Constantinople, where Isaac Angelus then reigned. At first, the Emperor of the East ordered the governors of his states to harass the crusading army; but finding, after some skirmishes, that Frederick could not be thus treated with impunity, Isaac came to reason, and sent ambassadors with an offer of ships and provisions. Nevertheless, he formed an alliance with Saladin; and, in various ways, made the rival Cæsar feel the effects of his perfidy.

Europe left behind, and the Hellespont crossed, Frederick Barbarossa arrived among the Turks, and found a new foe in the Sultan of Iconium. Having been as lavish of his promises as the Greek Emperor, the Sultan proved not less perfidious. No sooner had the crusaders reached the Meander, than they began to comprehend their situation. The banks of

the river, the tops of the mountains, and the surrounding thickets, were defended by the Sultan's soldiers; and when the German warriors attempted to pass, they were assailed on all sides by arrows and javelins.

The crusaders were about to ford the Meander, when they learned that the Duke of Suabia, who led the van, was missing, and supposed him to be dead. But the Emperor's piety and courage were proof even against such tidings of calamity. "Woe is me!" he exclaimed, "my son is slain; but Christ lives. On, my men!" Encouraged by the words of their aged chief, soldiers and men charged through the stream, bearing down all opposition, and slaughtering the Turks in such numbers, that their corpses covered the passage they had been ordered to defend.

This victory achieved, Frederick Barbarossa and his soldiers proceeded on their way. But they were, ere long, involved in serious difficulty and distress. Not only were they exposed to cold, hunger, and famine, but to constant attacks by the Sultan's troops, who harassed them night and day. At length, to avert still worse evils, Frederick determined to besiege Iconium; and directed his march towards that city.

It was about the feast of Pentecost when the Emperor of Germany, after having overcome thousands of dangers, arrived before Iconium, within the walls of which the Sultan had shut himself. At first, matters were somewhat alarming. Scarcely, indeed, had the

crusaders encamped, when a fearful storm burst upon their camp; and when next morning dawned, the Turks, led by the Sultan's son, came forth in such numbers, that defeat appeared inevitable. The Emperor, however, was undaunted. "I thank God," he exclaimed, raising his hands in the sight of all, "that the battle so long delayed by the flight of our foes, is now about to be fought."

The courage of Frederick was not lost upon his troops. Inspired by the sight of his countenance, so calm in the midst of danger, they shouted their battle-cry, and came hand to hand with the foe. Nothing could resist the onset, and ere the combat had long continued, heaps of Turks lay slain around. The city yielded without delay; and the Germans entered, with swords in their hands and vengeance at their hearts, the capital in which they had been promised provisions and peace.

Meanwhile, the Sultan of Iconium ascended a lofty tower, and thence viewed the country around and the hostile armies. Seeing that fortune was against him, and that his host was vanquished, the Sultan sent messengers to the Emperor throwing all the blame of hostilities on his son, and promising to do whatever was required. A treaty was accordingly negotiated, and hostages given by the Sultan for its fulfilment.

The capture of Iconium changed, for the better, the situation of the crusaders; and, as the fame of their exploits spread through the East, the Armenians

sent to solicit the Emperor's alliance. The progress of the German army was then rapid and victorious; and their discipline excited such admiration, and was reported in such terms to Saladin, that he began to quake at their approach. Everything, in fact, so far as the Germans were concerned, looked promising, and they had already begun to indulge in visions of victory, when one day they reached the Selef, a little river, which rises in the mountains of Isauria, and washes the walls of Seleucia.

On that day, however, a melancholy event swept all visions of conquest away. It was ordered that the great Emperor should never reach the opposite bank alive. No danger, indeed, appeared to impend. While the sumpter horses and baggage were passing over, Frederick halted near a rock, on which was inscribed the words, "Here the greatest of men shall perish." Becoming impatient, and wishing to accelerate the march, the Emperor dashed into the stream at the nearest point, with the idea of getting before the sumpter horses, and pursuing his march at the head of his army. The stream, however, proved too much for the aged warrior; and, carried down by its force, he struck his head against a tree, and falling from his horse, was immersed in the water. A cry of horror instantly rose, and hundreds of men rushed to the rescue. But when dragged out, Frederick was quite benumbed, and he almost instantly expired. His death filled the crusading army with

dismay; and while some of the German warriors continued their expedition towards Antioch, under the Duke of Suabia, others, discouraged and despairing, deserted their standard, and returned home.

The news of the death of the great Emperor, on reaching Germany, caused the utmost grief; and many of his subjects refused to believe that he was no more. Even now, German tradition asserts that Frederick is not dead, but sleeping in a rocky cavern in the hills near Salzburg, ready to appear once more on earth, when things come to the worst. It is added, that a peasant once stumbling among the rocks, entered the cavern, and saw the Emperor seated at, and leaning his elbow on, a marble table, through which his beard had grown in such a way as to stream on the floor. He was half awake; and, looking up, he inquired what time it was; and, on receiving an answer, said—"Not time yet; but will be soon."

Well nigh seven centuries ago, however, the funeral rites of Frederick Barbarossa were performed on the banks of the Selef. The body, after being adorned with royal magnificence, was conveyed to Antioch, and there the flesh, having been boiled from the bones, was laid in the Church of the Apostolic Sec, while the bones were sent by sea to Tyre, that they might thence be conveyed to Jerusalem. It was ordained, however, that Frederick should not find a

resting-place in the Holy City he had vowed to rescue ; for, at Tyre, the good Archbishop buried the remains of the great Emperor with becoming solemnity, and pronounced a funeral oration worthy of the obsequies of a monarch of whom Christendom had been proud.

CHAPTER X.

THE VOYAGE OF CŒUR DE LION.

WHEN Henry, King of England, died of grief and weariness at the palace of the Plantagenets on the banks of the Loire, Richard Cœur de Lion had reached the age of thirty-two, and won high renown among the warriors of his generation. His appearance was such as to give the idea of a man frank in friendship and formidable in war. His form was bulky and strong; his limbs long, but finely proportioned; and he had a fair face, set off with bright blue eyes and auburn hair, which he wore in curls. Array such a personage in a tunic of rose-coloured satin, girded at the waist, with a mantle of striped silver tissue brocaded with half moons; hang at his belt a sword of Damascus steel, with a golden hilt, in a silver-scaled sheath; place on his head a scarlet bonnet, brocaded with gold; mount him on a Spanish steed, magnificently harnessed; and you will have some idea of Cœur de Lion, as he appeared to those contemporaries in whose company he went to do battle with the infidel.

Richard was a native of England, having first seen

the light at Beaumont, near Oxford. During his father's life he had been the most refractory of sons, and taken a prominent part in those parricidal wars, which brought down our first Plantagenet King with sorrow to the grave. However, when the corpse of Henry was on its way from Chinon to its resting-place, Richard, touched with remorse, met the procession, and with signs of contrition accompanied the funeral to the abbey of Foutrevault, and made some slight atonement for breaches of filial duty by praying at the side of his father's corpse.

A few months after Henry had departed this life, Richard was welcomed in England, and invested with the symbols of sovereignty at Westminster. The coronation was rendered memorable by a fearful massacre of the Jews, which began in London and extended all over England.* Richard issued a proclamation taking the Jews under his protection; but he was in no frame of mind to exert himself much in

* "On the very day of the coronation," says Richard of Devizes, "about that solemn hour in which the Son was immolated to the Father, a sacrifice of the Jews to their father the devil was commenced in the city of London; and so long was the duration of this famous mystery, that the holocaust could scarcely be accomplished on the ensuing day. The other cities and towns of the kingdom emulated the faith of the Londoners, and with a like devotion despatched their bloodsuckers with blood to hell, everywhere throughout the realm: only Winchester alone, the people being prudent and circumspect, and the city always acting mildly, spared its vermin."—*Chronicles of the Crusades*.

their behalf. Ever since the conference at Gisors, he had been occupied with visions of battles in Palestine ; and no sooner was the Confessor's crown placed on his head, than he bent his whole thoughts towards the East. Not content with the money exacted by his father as "the Saladin tenth," he turned his presence-chamber into a mart, and disposed of towns, castles, and demesne-lands to the highest bidder. Some of his ministers remonstrated, but in vain. "If I could find a proper purchaser," he said, "I would sell London itself." Having disposed of the earldom of Northumberland to Hugh Pudsey, Bishop of Durham, he jocosely boasted that "he had made a young earl out of an old bishop."

While occupied with the task of raising money for the crusade, Richard was reminded by a messenger from Philip that their departure was fixed for Easter, 1190. The King of England engaged upon oath to be ready at the time named ; and, having nominated the Bishop of Durham as regent, repaired to Normandy, and held a great council at Rouen. The departure of the two Kings was then postponed to midsummer, when their magnificent armies mustered on the plains of Vezelay, and moved in company to Lyons. There they parted—Philip to betake himself to Genoa, where he hoped to hire transports ; Richard to march down the Rhône to Marseilles, where he expected to meet the English fleet.

Between the time of his meeting with William of

Tyre at Gisors and his death in the palace of Chinon, Henry had built ships for his voyage to the East. Richard was thus enabled, besides other vessels of war, to launch fifty galleys of three banks of oars, and he moreover selected transports from the shipping in all his ports. The English King found himself, unlike other sovereigns, quite independent of Venice or Genoa, and had, in fact, at his command the most formidable fleet that Europe had ever seen.

It was from Dartmouth that the English ships sailed, with a magnificent display of banners and painted shields. Their voyage, however, was not fortunate. While crossing the Bay of Biscay, the ships were scattered in all directions; and many of them suffered so fearfully from the tempest and the waves, that their ultimate safety was ascribed to the interference of St. Edmund and Thomas à Becket.

Richard, on reaching Marseilles, learned with disappointment that the English fleet had not arrived. After waiting some days, his patience gave way; and, having hired galleys to convey him to Genoa, he went on board, leaving the bulk of his army to embark for Sicily. Having sailed into the river Arno, and visited Pisa, he proceeded to the mouth of the Tiber, and was there met by a Cardinal, who welcomed him to the papal territories. The interview between Cœur de Lion and the Cardinal was not altogether satisfactory. The Cardinal, unfortunately, asked payment of some dues; and the King, in a rage, abused him,

without regard to his spiritual character. Declining to visit Rome, Richard repaired to Naples, and rode up a lovely pass of the Appenines to Salerno.

When Cœur de Lion entered Calabria, and was passing through a village, unattended save by a single knight, he was informed that one of the inhabitants possessed a very fine hawk. The King, wanting some exciting sport, and understanding that the owner was merely a peasant, who had no right to keep such a bird, entered the man's tenement and seized it. The Calabrian rustic, not relishing the loss of his hawk, ran after the King, with the cry of "Stop, thief!" The neighbours came to the spot with stones and sticks, and one of them with a sword made a thrust at Richard, who still kept the bird on his wrist. Enraged, Cœur de Lion struck the peasant with the back of his sword; and the blade breaking, he was in a helpless predicament, and forced to fly for his life to a priory. Reaching the coast, he pitched his tent near the cavern of Seylla; and next day, the fleet having appeared, with sound of trumpets and clang of horns, he entered the port of Messina, where the French King had already arrived.

Philip Augustus now proposed to proceed to the East; but, the winds proving contrary, the crusaders determined upon wintering in Sicily. William the Good, the last of the Norman rulers of Sicily, had recently died, under the impression that his aunt, the Princess Constance, would succeed, and that Queen

Joan, his widow, who was Richard's sister, would enjoy a magnificent dower. But so strong was the prejudice against the government of women, that Tancred, an illegitimate scion of the royal house of Sicily, had not only seized the throne of Constance, but withheld Joan's dower, and placed the royal widow in durance. Richard, indignant at his sister being so treated, demanded that she should be restored to liberty, and that she should be paid her dower. Tancred, complying with one demand, sent Joan to Messina; but hesitated about the dower. Richard, not to be trifled with, crossed the straits, placed his sister in the Castle of Baynard, and returning to Messina, expelled the monks from a monastery, and converted it into a store-house. Next day, when his soldiers were strolling through the town, they were set upon by the inhabitants, who killed them without mercy, and closed the gates of the town. The crusaders, enraged at this outrage, were about to scale the walls; but Richard, riding among them, compelled them to fall back; and going to the French camp, he there had an interview with the magistrates, and obtained promises of redress.

But, ere this, mischief had appeared in another form. The English crusaders had begun to quarrel with those from France; and Philip, with the chief men of Messina, repaired to the English King's tent to complain and remonstrate. Richard was promising redress, when the conference was interrupted in

a way which made his blood boil. In fact, while the Kings were in council, a band of Sicilians, gathering on the hills over the English camp, threatened an assault, and wounded a knight of Normandy, whom chance threw in their way. The sight kindled Richard's ire, and, rushing out, with vows of vengeance, he led his soldiers up the hillside, repulsed the Sicilians, chased them to their gates, and, taking the city by storm, planted the flag of England on the highest tower. The French, however, lent no assistance; and Philip, who seemed rather inclined to take part with the Sicilians, expressed such indignation, that Richard was under the necessity of lowering his standard and committing the city to the Templars and Knights of St. John.

Tancred now began to comprehend the man with whom he had to deal. Warned by the past, the Sicilian King came to terms, paid a large part of Joan's demand, and plighted the hand of his infant daughter to Richard's nephew, Arthur, Duke of Brittany. But the winter, though enlivened by a magnificent banquet, which Richard gave at Christmas, wore slowly away; and disputes soon broke out between the Kings.

When a boy, Richard had been contracted in marriage to Alice, Philip's sister, and the Princess, with her dowry, had been placed in Henry's custody. Engaged in war, Richard paid little attention to his betrothed: and it was not till incited by his mother, that he

demanded her hand. Henry, however, exhibited no inclination to grant his son's request; and Richard, while taking part in a tournament at Pampeluna, became enamoured of Berengaria, daughter of the King of Navarre. On ascending the English throne, he deputed his mother to demand Berengaria in marriage; and the mission having been crowned with success, Berengaria arrived at Messina, and was placed under the protection of Queen Joan. Philip, on seeing this, charged Richard with breach of a matrimonial treaty; and Richard, putting aside all delicacy, informed Philip, that Alice had wrecked her maiden reputation by a scandalous intrigue. High words, of course, passed between the comrades-in-arms; but at length, when spring arrived, Philip, finding that the case would not bear discussion, compounded the dispute for a sum of money, and, leaving the English King to celebrate his marriage, set sail for Acre.

After the departure of Philip, Richard became too enthusiastic to delay his enterprise for his wedding; and embarking in one galley, while Berengaria, under the auspices of Queen Joan, embarked in another, he sailed for the Holy Land. The voyage was interrupted by a tempest which scattered the fleet, and Richard reached Rhodes without his bride, whose galley had taken refuge at Cyprus. Richard, learning that two of his ships had been maltreated at Cyprus, sailed thither with his fleet; and no sooner

did he recognise the galley in which Berengaria and Queen Joan were, than he concluded they had been injured, and vowed vengeance on the islanders.

Cyprus was inhabited by Greeks, and governed by a prince of imperial lineage, who styled himself "Isaac, Emperor of Cyprus." With an idea of resisting the crusaders, this potentate ranged his troops along the shore, and placed some galleys at the mouth of the harbour. But his bravado had not the intended effect. Hardly, indeed, had Richard become aware that he was defied, when he seized his ponderous battle-axe, leaped into a boat, and chasing the Emperor to Nicosia, took possession of Limisso. Next morning, however, Isaac sent to sue for peace; and Richard, expressing his readiness to negotiate, met the Emperor outside the city. A reconciliation then took place; and Isaac engaged to pay Richard a large sum in gold, to follow the English to Palestine with a well-appointed force, and to give his youthful daughter as a hostage for his good faith.

Matters had scarcely been thus arranged, when Isaac escaped, and again attempted resistance. But Richard was not to be baffled. After cutting off the wily Greek's flight by sea, the English King marched upon the capital, and took Isaac's daughter prisoner. This last circumstance was too much for the Emperor of Cyprus. He left his stronghold, threw himself at the King's feet, and offered his own life for his child's freedom. Richard, while de-

taining the Princess, ordered her father to be put in chains. The crestfallen Cypriot entreated that he might not be disgraced by bonds of iron, and Richard, laughing, ordered chains of silver to be forged for the imperial captive.

No pity appears to have been felt for Isaac, when thus deprived of his crown and liberty. Indeed, Geoffrey de Vinsauf, an Anglo-Norman monk, who accompanied the crusaders, and wrote, in their camp, a history of the expedition, treats the Emperor as the worst of human beings. "He was the most wicked of men," says Vinsauf, "surpassing Judas in treachery, and wantonly persecuting all who professed the Christian religion. He was said to be a friend of Saladin, and it was reported that they had drunk each other's blood, as a sign and testimony of mutual treaty, as if, by the mingling of blood outwardly, they might become kinsmen in reality."

Having reduced Cyprus, Richard resolved on being crowned king of the island, and remaining to solemnise his marriage. A grand feast was accordingly proclaimed; and when Berengaria had, in the month of May, become Queen of England, the English crusaders embarked in their vessels, hoisted their sails, and steered for Acre.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SIEGE OF ACRE.

AMONG the cities of the East, Acre, situated on a promontory at the foot of Mount Carmel, and washed by the waters of the Mediterranean, was one of the most important in the eyes of the crusaders. Surrounded on the land side with deep ditches, fortified with high walls and strong towers, that dominated over promontory and plain, and frequented by mariners and merchants from all parts of Europe and Asia, the capture and recovery of the place might well engage the attention of warriors. Accordingly Saladin, after his victory at Tiberias, hastened to make himself master of Acre; and Guy de Lusignan, on regaining liberty, devoted his whole energies to the task of wresting it from Saladin's grasp.

The siege of Acre commenced in the autumn of 1189. Guy de Lusignan at first had not more than nine thousand men under his banner; and Saladin treated the Christian King's operations with some degree of contempt. Ere long, however, the Oriental warrior became alarmed. In fact, there were

rumours of aid from Europe; and the Sultan, roused to exertion, assembled a numerous army, approached Acre, occupied all the high ground in the neighbourhood, and placed Guy, who had come as a besieger, in the predicament of being besieged. Nevertheless, the Christians of the East maintained their position, and soon found themselves reinforced by crusaders from Denmark, from Friesland, and from almost every country in Europe, among whom was Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, who had preceded the English King, with five hundred men, under a banner on which was inscribed the name of Thomas à Becket.

The rapid influx of crusaders, and the daily arrival of ships from Europe, inspired the Moslems with dismay; and many of Saladin's emirs counselled a retreat. The Sultan, however, contrived to preserve his equanimity, and endeavoured to dispel their fears. "This," said he, "is a trick. These Christians take away their ships by night and bring them back again at dawn of day, as if they were newly arrived, for the purpose of making a display of strength." Saladin, however, was not ignorant of the actual state of affairs, and was, in reality, torn with anxiety, while exhibiting "a calm and fearless countenance."

Such was the situation of the armies that covered the plain of Acre, when the crusaders resolved on giving Saladin battle. Leaving the brave Geeffrey de Lusignan to protect their camp, they advanced to the attack, and their onslaught was so fierce, that

Saladin's army gave way. The Sultan was in the utmost peril ; but, supported by the Mamelukes, he stood his ground, and, rallying his men, renewed the combat. The fortune of the day soon changed ; and Saladin's horsemen charging impetuously, first destroyed the Frankish cavalry, and then dispersed the Knights of the Temple. In vain did Geoffrey de Lusignan come to the rescue, and use all his efforts to rally the fugitives. The struggle proved hopeless ; the slaughter was terrible, and the total destruction of the Christians would have been inevitable, had not Geoffrey stayed the rush with sufficient success to save the camp. As it was, the crusaders suffered severely, and they owed their safety, not to their own exertions, but to the disorder of their foes.

Saladin did not attempt to follow up the advantage he had won. In truth, the great Sultan was in no position to do so. Provisions were scarce ; winter was approaching ; and prudence compelled him to retire to the mountains. But no sooner did spring return, than he hastened to the encounter ; and, with drums beating and banners flying, his mighty army descended to the plain. The Christians were somewhat dismayed at sight of such foes ; and well nigh in despair, when three wooden towers, constructed by them during winter, were assailed by Greek fire and consumed, as if struck by lightning. Moreover, an Egyptian fleet that entered the port added to their

danger; and Saladin's attacks were so incessant, that no repose could be got, night or day. Conflict after conflict took place; and on each occasion the crusaders had the worst.

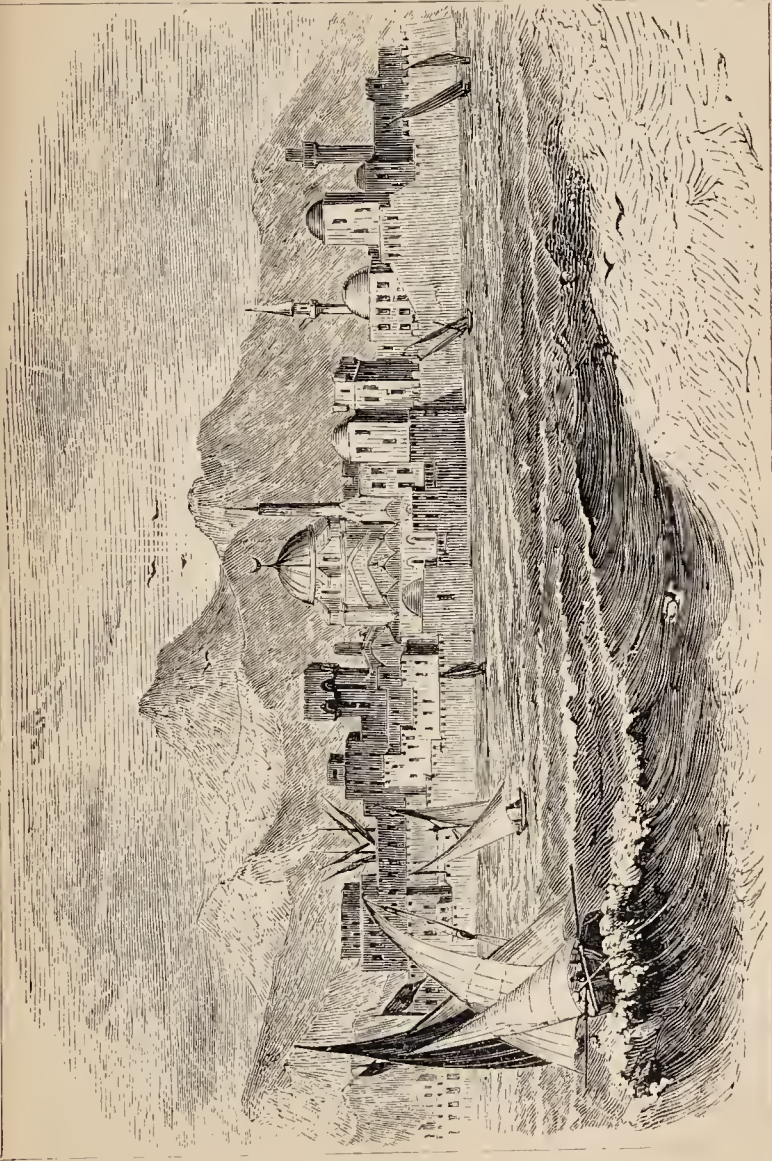
About this stage of the operations, the Duke of Suabia, who had halted for a time at Antioch, arrived at Acre. But the crusaders, who had heard of the magnificent army led from Germany by Frederick Barbarossa, were mortified when only five thousand men appeared. The Duke, however, was ambitious of signalising his arrival by some memorable exploit, and insisted on immediately attacking the foe. The Christian leaders agreed, all the more readily, perhaps, that Saladin was known to be a prey to sickness. But the Sultan, albeit too unwell to mount on horseback, caused himself to be carried to the battle, and enacted the part of general with so much skill, that the crusaders, after fighting for a whole day, returned to their camp baffled and dispirited.

Nor was this the worst. New misfortunes befell the crusaders. Famine and disease attacked the camp; and death carried off many of the principal warriors. At the same time, the circumstance of Sybil, wife of Guy de Lusignan, with her two children, going the way of all flesh, caused fresh discord; for Guy was utterly disinclined to part with the crown which he had worn as her husband; and Conrad of Montferrat, having by a scandalous intrigue married Sybil's younger sister, Isabel, who was the heiress,

proved himself a formidable rival. During winter, the army was divided into two parties, ever on the eve of conflict; and the condition of the crusaders was in every respect deplorable, when the spring of 1191 came; and, with spring, Philip Augustus and the warriors of France.

Never was king more welcome than Philip. His presence revived the hopes of the besiegers, and nerved them for new encounters. After pitching their tents within bowshot of the enemy's lines, the French hastened to the attack. But the efforts made by Philip being promptly met, were unsuecessful; and the courage of the crusaders again drooped. Besides, the French monarch's arrival furnished Saladin with a fair excuse for rousing all Moslems to arms; and warriors from two continents flocked to his standard.

While the tents of martial tribes, gathered from Asia and Africa, covered hills, and valleys, and plains, and while the soldiers of the cross were thinking anxiously of what a day might bring forth, the appearance of the English fleet, on the 8th of June, diffused general joy. A clangour of trumpets and musical instruments hailed the coming of Cœur de Lion; and the French King, hastening to the shore, received his royal rival with the utmost courtesy, and, with chivalrous gallantry, lifted Berengaria from the boat to the beach. The day was kept as a jubilee; wine was drunk from costly cups; the deeds of the ancients were recited; popular ballads were



Crusades and Crusaders.]

ACRE.

sung; harps, pipes, and timbrels sounded on every side; and when night, which was passed in dancing, set in, wax torches and flaming lights sparkled in such profusion, that the Turks fancied the valley was on fire.

The presence of the English might well, indeed, revive the fainting courage of the Christians in the East. No fear could be entertained of that feudal army being found wanting on the day of trial. Cœur de Lion was considered as quite a host in himself; and the men whom he led were proud of the prowess, and inspired by the spirit, of their King. Moreover, he was accompanied by Anglo-Norman nobles, who, as war chiefs, had no rivals in Europe. William Ferrars, Earl of Derby; Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk; Robert Fitz-Parnel, Earl of Leicester; Hubert Walter, Bishop of Salisbury; Ralph Glanville, Justiciary of England; Hugh de Gourney, grandson of Girard, who fought in Palestine with Robert Curthose; Richard, Earl of Clare, head of that family which took so conspicuous a part in the conquest of Ireland; and Hugh Neville, heir-male of that Norman whose name figures in Dugdale as the Conqueror's admiral—were the captains who now encamped around the royal standard of England under the walls of Acre.

But the grandeur of the English crusaders tended to inspire hatred in the breasts of their rivals, and, in a few days, discord appeared. Any feelings of friendship that ever existed between Richard and

Philip had evaporated at Messina; and, within a week after their re-union, disputes about the disposal of the crown of Jerusalem revived the old feud. Richard and the English, supported by the Pisans and the Knights of St. John, advocated the claim of Guy de Lusignan; Philip, allying himself with the Germans, the Genoese, and the Knights of the Temple, took part with Conrad of Montferrat. The two parties, ever ready to come to blows, were in no temper to unite their arms against the infidels. They were still contending, when Cœur de Lion was prostrated with sickness.

While Richard lay in his tent, Philip resolved to take Acre without English aid; and, having erected machines of war, gave orders for an assault. The attempt, though boldly made, entirely failed; and subsequent efforts were not more successful. In one of these, Alberic Clements, a man renowned for valour, won immortal fame. Seeing the French toiling to no purpose, he exclaimed—"This day I will enter into the city of Acre, or perish, if it please God;" and boldly mounted a ladder. As he reached the top of the wall, the Turks surrounded him on all sides; and the French, who were on the point of following, were so overwhelmed by the pressure of numbers on the ladder, that many were bruised to death, and others were dragged away fearfully injured. Alone and overpowered, Alberic struggled till he was pierced with countless wounds, and died, as he had wished, a

martyr in his Redeemer's cause. The French were much discouraged by their loss, and gave themselves up to lamentation and mourning.

While Philip Augustus was vainly endeavouring to reduce Acre without English aid, King Richard was stretched on a couch of languishing. But, however weak might be the flesh of Cœur de Lion, his spirit was willing. Hoping to have the glory of accomplishing that in which his rival had failed, he ordered his soldiers to prepare for an assault, and caused himself to be carried to the walls, that he might, by his presence, animate them to deeds of heroism. Accordingly, everything was arranged; and the English advanced to the attack, the King appearing among them on a silken bed, with an arbalist, from which he discharged arrows and darts at the besieged. Encouraged by inspiring words and promises of reward, the English wrought deeds of valour; and Richard, with his sling, slew many of the foe, among others a man who boastfully displayed himself on the ramparts, wearing the armour of Alberic Clements. But the height of the walls and the valour of the Turks baffled all efforts to take the city; and the English were fain, as the French had been, to abandon the assault in despair.

Repeated failures convinced the Kings of England and France of the impolicy of their conduct, and, harmony having been restored, they, in compact, besieged the city with great ardour. But the Turks

were in an unyielding mood. Obstinate resisting every attack, and throwing Greek fire, they kept the besiegers at bay. Many fierce and sanguinary conflicts took place between Saladin and the crusaders, but neither side, for a time, gained any decided advantage.

Nevertheless, the crusaders persevered with their enterprise. Every day new means were tried to reduce the city; and the besieged, suffering from famine and fatigue, proposed to capitulate. But Philip vowed to slaughter every Moslem, unless all the cities taken from the Christians were restored; and the emirs, indignant at the demand, declared that they would rather die beneath the ruins of Acre than consent to such terms. "We will defend the city," said they with decision, "as the lion defends his blood-stained lair."

Events did not justify the boast of the emirs. For some days, indeed, they continued to resist with obstinacy. But at length, giving way to despair, they sent pigeons with intimation of their position to Saladin, and resolved on leaving the city by night, with the hope of escaping to the Sultan's camp. Their project, however, became known to the crusaders, who kept so strict a watch, that egress was impossible. Under these circumstances, the emirs consented to yield Acre, and to leave thousands as captives, on condition that the soldiers composing the garrison, leaving behind their arms and property,

were allowed to depart without molestation. The two Kings agreed to the terms; the Turks marched out, and the crusaders entering, planted the Christian standard on the ramparts; and Hugh de Gournay divided the spoil between the two armies in such a way as to prevent disputes.

On this occasion, Richard displayed a degree of imprudence destined to cost him dear. After entering Acre, he not only offended the King of France by taking possession of the palace, but insulted the Duke of Austria by ordering that prince's banner to be pulled down from the walls, thrown into the ditch, and replaced by the standard of England. Little notice appears to have been taken of these matters at the time. Philip Augustus quietly became the guest of the Templars, and Leopold of Austria digested the insult as he best could. But both "bit their gloves" and treasured up the wrong.

It soon became evident, that Richard and Philip could not act amicably together; and the French King, under pretext of suffering from the climate, intimated his intention of returning to Europe. Richard offered no opposition, but exacted an oath that his territories should not be attacked in his absence. Having taken the oath, Philip left his army under the Duke of Burgundy's command, and departed, not without significant hints from the assembled crusaders that he was regarded as a deserter.

CHAPTER XII.

BATTLE OF ASSUR.

WHEN Philip Augustus had sailed for Europe, and the crusaders had repaired the battered works of Acre, King Richard, issuing from the gate, pitched his tent outside the walls, and gave orders that the whole army should leave the captured city, and prepare to march to Jerusalem. The behest of the English King was not very readily obeyed. Acre, in fact, was full of choice wine and captivating women; and the soldiers of the cross were in no haste to leave quarters where such luxuries abounded.

Cœur de Lion, however, was resolute in his purpose; and the crusaders, gradually tearing themselves from their pleasures, quitted the city; “but,” says the chronicler, “slowly and peevishly, as if they did it against their will.” Leaving the two Queens—Joan and Berengaria—with the Emperor Isaac’s little daughter, at Acre, and giving orders that no women, save washerwomen, should accompany the army, Richard commenced his march along the coast, having the sea on his right, and on his left heights from

which the Saracens watched his movements and awaited a favourable opportunity to attack. The army, however, marched in formidable order: the Templars leading the van; the King of England, with his standard towering conspicuously, in the centre; and the Knights of St. John bringing up the rear. Every evening, when the crusaders halted under the shade of palm-trees, the heralds of the several camps three times cried aloud—"Save the Holy Sepulchre!" and every soldier bent his knee, and said "Amen!"

In the meantime, Saladin was not inattentive to the movements of his foes. Day by day the great Sultan infested the crusaders' line of march, and, at the head of an army infinitely superior in numbers, caused them the utmost annoyance. Sometimes their van was attacked; at other times, the rear was harassed; and every soldier who strayed, was carried off as if by magic. The crusaders, however, pursuing their march, succeeded in keeping the enemy at bay; and in the many skirmishes which took place, deeds of valour were wrought on both sides.

While advancing towards the city of Assur, and entering a narrow plain, on the left of which rose the steep mountains of Naplouse, the crusaders were exposed to the most severe attacks. On one occasion, the Saracens, descending from the heights upon the pack horses, carried off much baggage, and, charging in the midst of the confusion which their attack had created, scattered all who opposed. The crusaders,

however, exhibited high courage, and offered a desperate resistance. One man, named Everard, a follower of the Bishop of Salisbury, particularly distinguished himself. Happening in the fray to have his right hand cut off by a Saracen, Everard, without even changing countenance, clutched the sword with his left, and defended himself courageously against a host of assailants.

While Everard was thus occupied, Richard, being made aware of the attack, came galloping to the rescue. Shouting out "St. George! St. George!" the King cut down all who crossed his path; and the Saracens, amazed at such prowess, bore back, and escaped to their mountains. But their absence was merely temporary. Scarcely had Richard restored order, when his van and rear were again assailed. Every opportunity was seized on by the Sultan and his soldiers. At length a battle became inevitable.

It was Saturday, 7th September, 1191, and Saladin, with his main army, and his camels and dromedaries and baggage, had got in advance of the crusaders, and determined, if possible, to arrest their progress. With this object, the Sultan selected his post on the verge of a forest of oaks, which extended along the declivities of the mountains of Naplouse, and hard by a torrent, which crosses the plains of Assur and flows into the sea near the ramparts of the city. Part of the Moslem army covered the heights; while the main body awaited the foe on the margin of the river.

At the early dawn of a Syrian morning, on the eve of the Virgin's nativity, the crusaders armed for the conflict. Richard, aware of having to encounter a superior force, marshalled the Christian host with great care, and in five divisions. The first was formed by the Knights of the Temple, who led the van; the second comprised the men of Anjou and Brittany, marching in good order; the third was formed of the warriors of Poitiers, under Guy de Lusignan; the fourth was composed of the warriors of England and Normandy, led by such barons as the Earl of Leicester, Hugh Neville, and Hugh de Gournay, and surrounding their national standard;* and the fifth consisted of the Knights of St. John, who "kept together so closely, that an apple, if thrown, would not have fallen to the ground without touching a man or a horse,"

The crusaders, thus arrayed, were moving onwards, and the Count of Champagne, the Duke of Burgundy, and the King of England, who was mounted on a

* "It was formed of a long beam, like the mast of a ship," says Vinsauf, "made of most solid ceiled work, on four wheels, put together with joints bound with iron; and, to all appearance, no sword or axe could cut, or fire injure it. A chosen body of soldiers were generally appointed to guard it, especially in a combat on the plains, lest by any hostile attack it should be broken or thrown down. It is very properly drawn on wheels: for it is advanced when the enemy yields, and drawn back if they press on. . . . It was surrounded by the Normans and English."—*Chronicles of the Crusades*.

magnificent bay steed he had brought from Cyprus, rode up and down narrowly watching the movements of the foe, when a body of Moslem warriors, on steeds of wondrous fleetness, charged suddenly down at full speed, and, mingling their voices in one fearful yell, commenced the attack by discharging arrows and darts. It was clear that Saladin intended to offer battle; and soon the appearance of white turbans and long pikes, visible through clouds of dust, announced to the crusaders the presence of the Sultan's mighty army. Ere long the Saracens advanced, divided into troops and companies, and preceded by clarions, trumpets, drums, and every species of musical instrument, likely to nerve the hand and fire the blood.

The crusaders soon saw that they were surrounded on all sides; and the Knights of St. John found themselves so hard pressed, that they could scarcely refrain from charging upon the foe. Being entreated, however, to keep in a close body, they marched on for awhile without retaliating. At length their plight became intolerable; and angry gestures indicated that the patience of the military monks was rapidly giving way.

"Oh, good St. George!" exclaimed one of the knights, "are we thus to be put to confusion without striking a blow on the impious race?"

"No," said the Grand Master, "it must not be so;" and he spurred towards the English King.

"My Lord King," said the Grand Master, approaching Richard, "we are violently pressed by the enemy, and in danger of eternal infamy if we return not their blows. We are losing our horses, one after another, and why should we bear with them any further?"

"Good Master," said the King, "it is your duty to sustain their attack;" and the Grand Master had scarcely rejoined his knights, when the enemy assailed them more fiercely than before.

"Why do we not charge them at full gallop?" said one of the knights.

"Yes," cried a hundred voices; "unless we defend ourselves by charging, we shall incur everlasting scandal, and so much the greater the longer we delay."

As this conversation was taking place, the marshal and another knight, wheeling round, rode lance in rest upon the Saracens; and the Knights of St. John, turning their horses' heads, prepared to charge. Almost as they did so, Saladin passed through the Moslem ranks, and roused the courage of his soldiers, who shouted—"God is powerful!"

Matters having reached this stage, the battle was begun by Sir James d'Avennes, who, at the head of European cavalry, penetrated twice into the Saracenic ranks. At the third charge, his leg was severed by the stroke of a Turkish sabre, and, surrounded by countless foes, he expired sword in hand. Falling in

the midst of Saracens, of whom he is said to have killed no fewer than fifteen, the gallant knight called loudly on King Richard to avenge his death.

Scarcely had Sir James d'Avennes breathed his last, when Cœur de Lion advanced with the main army of crusaders, and the shock was terrific. Breaking into the Moslem ranks, with his ponderous battle-axe in his hand, Cœur de Lion swept the Saracens before him, dispersing them right and left, and chasing them across the torrent. But meanwhile the crusaders, assailed on all hands by the crowd of foes, who poured down from the heights, were giving way ; and the King was under the necessity of retracing his steps to come to their aid.

A conflict of the most sanguinary character then took place ; Christian and Moslem fighting hand to hand and steel to steel. Cries of rage and despair mingled with the clash of sword and shield. In the midst of the battle, Richard, brandishing his axe and shouting "St. George !" figured prominently : and woe to the unfortunate wight who crossed the King's path. Wherever the contest was keenest, and the carnage most sanguinary, the Cyprian steed and the stalwart rider appeared. The very sight was terrible to foes. The bravest of Moslems watched with apprehension the Cyprian steed's furious rush ; the bravest of Moslems recoiled in terror before the swing of Cœur de Lion's battle-axe. In vain, if we are to credit historians, Saladin threw himself into the

battle, and crossed weapons with the mighty Plantagenet. Saracen after Saracen reeled to the ground; and it became impossible for them, notwithstanding their numbers, to withstand the onslaught of thousands of knights, headed by such a hero-king. Broken and beaten on all sides, the Moslem warriors abandoned the field, and retreated to the forest of oaks.

The result of the battle, being such as he had not anticipated, mortified Saladin; and, calling together the emirs, he addressed them in anger.

“Are these,” asked the Sultan, “the deeds of my brave troops, once so boastful, and whom I have so loaded with gifts? It is a disgrace to our nation, thus to become as nothing in comparison with their glorious ancestors.”

“Most sacred Sultan,” answered one of the emirs, “this charge is unjust, for we fought with all our strength against the Franks, and did our best to destroy them. But it was of no avail: for they are cased in impenetrable armour, which no weapon can pierce. And further, there is among them one superior to any man we have ever seen. They call him Melech Ric; and he seems a king born to command the whole earth. He always charges before the rest, slaying our men; no man can resist him or escape out of his hands. What more could we have done against a foe so formidable?”

CHAPTER XIII.

AFTER ASSUR.

AFTER his great victory on the Assur, Richard led the pilgrim army towards Joppa. On reaching that ancient city, the crusaders found that it was so dilapidated, as to be incapable of affording shelter. However, they encamped in olive gardens outside the walls, and refreshed themselves with the figs, grapes, pomegranates, and citrons, with which the country abounded.

It would seem that the crusaders ought, at this time, to have pushed on to Jerusalem. Everything, however, combined to retard their progress towards the Holy City. Ere long, tidings reached the camp that Saladin was destroying Ascalon; but the intelligence appeared so improbable, that Richard could not credit the report. He, therefore, despatched Geoffrey de Lusignan to ascertain the truth; and, on the news being confirmed, he deliberated with the Duke of Burgundy and the French lords, whether they should proceed to Jerusalem or endeavour to save Ascalon.

“It seems to me,” said the King, “that any difference of opinion may be not only useless, but dangerous. The Turks who are dismantling Ascalon, dare not meet us in the field. I think we should save the city, as a protection to the pilgrims who pass that way.”

“Our opinion is quite opposite,” said the French lords; “and we recommend that Joppa should rather be restored, as furnishing a shorter and easier route for pilgrims going to the Holy Sepulchre.”

The opinion of the Duke of Burgundy and his friends, finding favour with the majority, was adopted; and the crusaders having determined to remain at Joppa, began to rebuild the towers and clear out the moat. The work, however, was not to the liking of all; and many, longing for scenes of revelry and dissipation, returned to gratify their tastes in the taverns and bagnios at Acre. Anxious to recall the soldiers of the cross to their duties, Richard sent Guy de Lusignan. But the influence of Guy was not sufficient to rouse them from their sinful pursuits; and the King of England, in order to accomplish his object, was under the necessity of sailing to Acre. He was successful in bringing the deserters back to Joppa, and conducted thither Queen Berengaria, Queen Joan, and other ladies, who shared the adventurous enterprise.

At Joppa, the crusaders appeared to forget the object with which they had gone to the East; and

months passed over without any effort being made to realise their aspirations. Richard did not exhibit the very best example. Besides giving way, in some degree, to the fascinations of a brilliant court, the King of England yielded to his reckless humour, and "wooed danger as a bride." The consequences were not, in all cases, particularly agreeable.

One day, when the Sultan's soldiers were scouring the country in all directions, Richard mounted his bay Cyprian steed, and, attended by a band of knights, rode forth with a view of enjoying the sport of hawking and of fighting any enemy who came in his way. Fatigued with his exertions, Richard lay down to rest, and fell fast asleep. While in this posture, the royal crusader and his attendants were suddenly awakened by the approach of foes; and he had scarcely time to spring upon his steed, when the Turks were upon him. Seeing himself surrounded, Richard drew his sword, and laid about him to such purpose that his assailants fled. On reaching a spot where another band lay in ambush, the Turks rallied and renewed the attack. The King fought desperately; but the odds were so overwhelming that his capture seemed inevitable. At a critical moment, however, William de Pratelles, one of his knights, shouted out: "I am the King: spare my life;" and the Turks, completely deceived, took him prisoner, while Richard spurred away to Joppa.

Soon after this escape, Cœur de Lion's chivalry

involved him in a danger almost equal in degree. A company of the Templars, having fallen into an ambuscade, the King of England sent the Earl of Leicester to their aid, promising to follow as soon as he could brace on his armour. Before there was time for the process, news came that the Templars were on the point of being overpowered by the enemy, and that the English Earl was likely to share their fate. "St. George," exclaimed Richard, "I should be unworthy of the name of king, if I abandoned those I have promised to succour;" and, without waiting for any one, he leaped on his war-horse. Galloping to the spot, Richard spurred into the conflict, and exerted his strength with such effect, that he rescued the Earl of Leicester, and nearly all the Templars who had not fallen previously to his arrival.

An antagonist very different from Saracens soon after crossed Richard's path. While the royal hero was riding homeward, he was suddenly exposed to serious danger from a wild boar, which planted itself in his way and opposed his progress. The King shouted; but the animal, instead of moving, stood, with foaming mouth, bristling hair, and erect ears, collecting all its strength and fury to attack. Even when Cœur de Lion rode round about, the boar, turning in a circle, kept its place and presented a most ferocious aspect. Richard was, of course, without a hunting spear; but, using his lance instead, he suc-

ceeded in piercing his grisly antagonist. The boar undauntedly met the charge, turned on one side in such a way as to break the weapon, and, rendered furious by a wound, charged the crusader with extraordinary ferocity. Richard, however, putting spurs to his steed, cleared the boar at a leap; and the boar, after tearing away part of the horse's trappings, made a desperate movement to close. But the King, availing himself of his steed's agility, and brandishing his blade, dealt the boar a stern blow in passing, and, wheeling round, terminated the contest by cutting the animal's sinews.

It was not without uneasiness that the crusaders learned the dangers to which their chief was continually exposing himself; and when the year drew to its close, the propriety of proceeding to Jerusalem forced itself on their attention. Accordingly, in January, 1192, the warlike pilgrims renewed their march; but, the season being rainy, the roads were found almost impassable; and, after suffering every kind of misery, they retreated to Asealon, the Eastern cavalry hovering in their rear.

On the 20th of January, the crusaders reached Asealon. But the city was not in such a state as to afford comfort. In fact, the fortifications were entirely dismantled; and the gates were so choked up with heaps of stones and rubbish, that, at first, to enter was found impossible.

After encamping, however, and making the best

of circumstances, Richard resolved on repairing the ramparts. Not only did the King waste time by working like a private soldier, but he gave mortal offence by insisting on others following his example.

“We came to Asia,” said many of the knightly crusaders, “not to rebuild Ascalon, but to reconquer Jerusalem.”

“I am neither a carpenter nor a mason,” said Leopold Duke of Austria, when pressed to leave his tent and take part in the operations.

Richard did not notice the expressions of indignation which came from less important personages. But when the Austrian demurred, he made use of his foot to indicate, in the most significant manner, the contempt he felt for Leopold, and abused the haughty Duke without reference to his rearing or his rank.

Before the restoration of Ascalon was completed, the zeal of the crusaders began to cool. Everything, in fact, was going wrong; and every man was at variance with his neighbour. At Acre, the partisans of Guy de Lusignan and Conrad of Montferrat fought hand to hand in the streets; and Saladin, aware of the feuds of his adversaries, prepared to strike a decisive blow.

While such was the state of affairs, the Prior of Hereford reached Richard with a message which threw the crusaders into commotion. It appeared that the King's government had not been satisfac-

torily carried on during his absence. In fact, the Bishop of Ely, whom Richard had left as Chancellor, had been banished from the realm, and John of Anjou, the King's brother, was projecting a usurpation. "If your Majesty does not return home with all haste," said the Prior, "you will not be able to recover your kingdom without a war."

Richard was much perplexed; and he, at once, recognised the expediency of treating with Saladin. Negotiations were accordingly opened; and the chiefs rivalled each other in courtesy. Richard is even said to have offered the hand of Queen Joan to the Sultan's brother Malekadel; and, seeing that the Sicilian Dido had mourned her dead lord for three years, she might not have interposed any serious objections to uniting her fate with a gallant Saracen. But the church was utterly hostile to the scheme; and she ultimately became the wife of the Count of Thoulouse. Richard, however, declared to Saladin that all he wanted was possession of Jerusalem. But Saladin replied that the Blessed City was as dear to Saracens as to Christians; and, negotiations having come to nought, the belligerents continued their struggle.

Meanwhile, the army of pilgrims having been asked to decide whether Guy de Lusignan or Conrad of Montferrat should be King of Jerusalem, decided in favour of the latter. But Conrad had scarcely time to congratulate himself on his good fortune, when he was murdered by two of the assassins of

the old Man of the Mountains. Henry, Count of Champagne, marrying Isabel, Conrad's widow, then became King of Jerusalem; while Richard, to console Guy de Lusignan, bestowed upon him the crown of Cyprus.

Richard, having failed in his pacific project, announced his intention of remaining for another year in the Holy Land; and in the month of June, after several enterprises which spread alarm among the Saracens, he marched towards Jerusalem. The soldiers were delighted at the prospect of entering the Holy City; and Saladin, in alarm, shut himself up within the walls, and made his emirs swear rather to bury themselves beneath the ruins than yield to the Christians. But the chief crusaders did not partake of the enthusiasm of their army; and the Sultan's alarm was unnecessary. Richard, indeed, hoped that Saladin would give them battle, and that a victory would clear their way. But the Sultan did not gratify the wishes of his martial foe; and while the crusaders were encamped in the vale of Hebron, Richard received news which made him more than ever anxious to leave the East. Besides, the pilgrim princes again fell out among themselves. Burgundy satirised Richard mercilessly in some verses, which were publicly sung; Cœur de Lion avenged himself by a similar effusion; and, after much controversy, they abandoned their enterprise. It was not without pain, that Richard gave the order to retreat; and,

after having done so, his affliction was such that he declared himself unworthy even to look upon the Holy City.

“Sire,” said one of Richard’s knights, entering the royal tent, “only come hither, and I will show you Jerusalem!”

“Oh, Lord God!” exclaimed the King, with tears in his eyes, and hands lifted towards heaven, “I pray thee that I may never see thy Holy City, since I cannot deliver it from the hands of thine enemies!”

After this scene, Richard fell back on Ascalon, and having fortified that city, repaired to Acre. Ere this the French and Germans rapidly deserted his standard; and Saladin, descending from the mountains, took Joppa. On hearing that the city had yielded to the Sultan, but the citadel was still in possession of the crusaders, Richard, who was at Acre, declared he would go to their rescue. “As God lives!” he exclaimed, “I will be with them, and give them all the aid in my power.” Landing at Joppa, he immediately fell upon the Turks sword in hand, and expelled them in confusion. A few days after, at the head of his scanty ranks, he encountered an army of seven thousand on a plain outside the city. Though infinitely inferior in number, Richard made a noble struggle, unhorsed every champion who crossed his path, killed the leader of the Moslems, spread consternation among his foes, and

excited the admiration of his friends. Night put an end to the conflict, but Richard's victory was secure; and his marvellous feats of heroism filled the East with his fame.*

When winter came, though the navigation of the Mediterranean was deemed the reverse of safe, Richard was eager to return to England. But the English King had no idea of stealing away as Philip Augustus had done. "The sea is stormy," he wrote to Saladin, "yet if you are inclined to make peace, I will brave all its tempests and proceed to Europe; if you desire war, I will run all risks and besiege Jerusalem." Saladin consulted his emirs, and they recommended him to obey the maxims of the Koran, which orders that peace should be granted to enemies when they ask it.

Richard, on learning that the Sultan was inclined to treat, proposed a personal interview. But Saladin declined this, on account of his ignorance of Richard's language. Ambassadors were therefore appointed to

* "This Richard, King of England," says Joinville, "performed such deeds of prowess when he was in the Holy Land, that the Saracens, on seeing their horses frightened at a shadow or a bush, cried out to them, 'What! dost think King Richard is there!' This they were accustomed to say from the many and many times he had conquered and vanquished them. In like manner, when the children of the Turks and Saracens cried, their mothers said to them, 'Hush! hush! or I will bring King Richard of England to you!' and from the fright these words caused, they were instantly quiet."—*Chronicles of the Crusades*.

conclude a treaty; and everything was satisfactorily arranged. Ascalon was to be demolished; Jerusalem was to be open to pilgrims; and the sea-coast from Tyre to Joppa was to be held by the Christians of the East. The King and the Sultan contended who should display most courtesy, and did not even require oaths to the terms, but contented themselves with their royal words, and touching the hands of each other's ambassadors. All the princes of Syria, whether Turk or Frank, were then invited to sign the treaty; Christians and Moslems celebrated the conclusion of peace with tournaments and festivals; and most of the crusaders, having visited the Holy City and the Holy Places, embarked for Europe.

After concluding peace with Cœur de Lion, Saladin returned to Damascus, where he enjoyed his glory for one year. At the end of that time, he lay down to die. "Go," said he to one of his emirs, "carry my shroud through the streets, and cry with a loud voice—'Behold all that Saladin, who overcame all the East, bears away of his conquests!'" The emir did as he was commanded; and the soul of the great Sultan parted from its tenement of clay.

Saladin did not deign to express any wish as to the succession; and, soon after he died, the empire began to fall to pieces. At first, indeed, his eldest son appeared likely to retain something of his father's power. Unfortunately for the young Sultan, he addicted himself to dissipation, and so scandalised

Moslems by indulging in wine, that serious discontent was felt. Malekadel, Saladin's brother, profited by these discontents to dethrone Saladin's son; and the dispossessed Sultan, driven from Damascus, applied to the Caliph of Bagdad. But Mahomet's successor, being virtually powerless, could only offer consolatory words to the injured grandson of Ayoub. "Rely upon it," said the Caliph, after listening with exemplary patience to the story of the exiled Sultan, "your enemies, for what they have done, will have to give an account to God."

CHAPTER XIV.

RICHARD'S RETURN.

IT was the autumn of 1192, when Cœur de Lion, having seen Queens Berengaria and Joan sail from Acre, prepared to follow them to Europe without delay. Before embarking, however, Richard remembered William de Pratelles, who had saved him from captivity, and ransomed the brave knight. At the same time, he ordered heralds to make proclamation "that all who had claims on him should come forward, and that all his debts should be paid fully, and more than fully, to avoid occasion afterwards of detraction or complaint."

After having thus sacrificed to honour, Richard went on board; and the royal fleet weighed anchor amid the tears and lamentations of the Syrian Christians. "Oh, Jerusalem, bereft now of every succour," they exclaimed, "how hast thou lost thy defender! Who will protect thee, should the truce be broken, now that King Richard is departed!"

The great crusader appears to have been profoundly affected when he sailed from Acre. Though

time had removed many an illusion, his heart still clung to the Syrian soil; and at dawn next morning he stretched out his hands, as he strained his eyes to gaze, for a last time, at the shore—"Holiest of lands," he exclaimed, "I commend thee to God's keeping, and I pray that He may grant me health to come and rescue thee from the infidel."

The ship in which the two Queens had embarked reached Sicily in safety; but Richard's voyage was less prosperous. A storm arising, his fleet was scattered, and his vessel wrecked on the coast of Istria. Trusting to find his way through Germany, Richard assumed a disguise, and, calling himself "Hugh the Merchant," he journeyed, in company with a faithful page and a priest named Baldwin de Bethune, across the mountains to Goritz.

When Richard reached Goritz, he endeavoured to assure his safety by sending his page to the governor for a passport. The value of a ring, with which he accompanied the request, excited suspicion; and the governor could not conceal his surprise. "This," said he, "is not the ring of a merchant: it is that of the King of England." The page on his return related the conversation that had passed, and Richard, in alarm, for which there was too much cause, departed for Friesach. Here a Norman knight recognised the King in spite of his disguise, intimated that danger was at hand, and presented him with a fleet steed on which to escape. Mounting, and attended only by

the page, who understood the German language, Richard travelled without entering a house, till, hungry and way-worn, he halted at the inn of a little village near Vienna, and despatched the page to purchase provisions.

Fortune again proved unfavourable. The dress of the boy excited suspicions; and, being seized and threatened, he confessed that he had left his master asleep in a rustic hostelry. A party of Austrian soldiers, conducted by the Duke, immediately went in search; and, entering the inn, they found the royal crusader in the kitchen busily employed in roasting fowls for dinner. Seeing how matters stood, Richard sprang up, drew his sword, and offered a desperate resistance; but when Leopold appeared, he agreed to surrender, and gave up his weapon.

After being captured, Richard was incarcerated in an Austrian castle; and the business was managed so secretly, that his very existence became a matter of doubt to his subjects. Ere long, however, Blondel de Nesle, whose minstrelsy Cœur de Lion had patronised, undertook to discover him, and traversed Germany with that object. For a time the enterprise seemed hopeless. One day, however, Blondel, coming to a castle in Tenebreuse, learned with interest that it contained a solitary prisoner, who, when he was tired of composing verses and found the hours hang heavy on his hands, was not above indulging in a carouse with his guards.

Blondel could not learn the name of the captive ; but, from the description, he was convinced that his search had not been in vain. Seating himself under the prison window, he commenced a song which Richard and he had in other days composed together. No sooner had Blondel finished the first couplet, than, to his joy, a well known voice from the window, in significant accents, sung the second. Blondel, no longer doubting that Richard was the solitary captive, hastened to give Queen Eleanor information as to the prison which contained her lion-hearted son.

On becoming aware of the discovery that Blondel had made, the Duke of Austria trembled. Terrified at the thought of having such a captive, and eager to divest himself of responsibility, Leopold surrendered Richard to Henry of Germany. The Emperor felt rejoiced to get the King of England into his power ; and at Easter, 1193, Cœur de Lion was removed to a castle in the Tyrol, and soon after brought before a Diet at Worms, charged with every imaginable crime. Being an orator, as well as a poet, however, Richard defended himself so eloquently, that princes and prelates, with tears in their eyes, besought the Emperor to act with less rigour and more justice.

Meanwhile Queen Eleanor implored the Pope to obtain her son's release ; and the Vicar of Christ, indignant that the foremost champion of the cross should be in a dungeon and in chains, promptly interposed. Nevertheless, the captivity of Richard lasted another

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year; and he did not regain his liberty till after stipulating to pay an enormous ransom. At length, in the spring of 1194, Richard found himself free; and, passing through the Low Countries, he sailed for England and landed at Sandwich.

On being restored to his kingdom, Richard immediately prepared to punish Philip Augustus for the injuries he had sustained at the hands of that monarch. War broke out in consequence, and occupied Cœur de Lion for four years. At the end of that time, the struggle having become more bitter than ever, the two Kings encountered near Gisors. A sanguinary battle was fought, Richard performed prodigies of valour, and Philip fled in such haste across the Epte that he narrowly escaped a watery grave. A truce having been then agreed to, Richard marched into Aquitaine, where his foes were, in ballads, expressing their joy that the arrow was forging which would be fatal to Cœur de Lion.

Many threatened men live long; and so perhaps might Richard but for his imperious humour. Happening to hear, after his arrival in Aquitaine, that a peasant, while ploughing, had turned up a valuable treasure, in the shape of a golden ornament representing a Roman Emperor at table, and that it had been seized by the Viscount of the district, Richard immediately claimed his share as sovereign of the country. The Viscount, however, declared he had received nothing but a pot of coins; and Richard,

in anger, besieged his castle. Reduced, ere long, to extremity, the garrison were on the point of surrendering, when unluckily, while the King was riding round to survey the fortress, an arrow from the cross-bow of a youth, named Adam de Gordon, pierced his shoulder. The wound, being unskilfully treated, mortified; and the King, after enduring agony for days, during which the castle yielded, learned that his end was at hand.

On hearing that his wound was mortal, Richard desired to see the youth who had shot the arrow, and Gordon was brought to his couch.

“Did you discharge the shaft with intent to kill?” asked the King.

“Yes, tyrant,” answered the youth, “and it was to avenge my father and brother, who both fell by your hand, and to rid the world of one who has done so much mischief!”

“Well,” said Richard, “I forgive you.”

Soon after this scene, Richard expired. According to his own request, his heart was carried to the cathedral of Rouen, and the body was laid, with royal honours, at his great father's feet, in the Abbey of Foutrevault.

CHAPTER XV.

SACK OF THE HOLY CITY.

WHEN Richard Cœur de Lion sailed from Acre, and the Syrian Christians were left to their own resources, the condition of the kingdom of Jerusalem became daily worse.

The Pope, it is true, ever and anon endeavoured to rouse Europe to succour the Holy Sepulchre; and, in 1202, a multitude of crusaders, under Baldwin Count of Flanders, directed their steps eastward. But, influenced by Dandolo, the old blind doge of Venice, these warriors turned aside to seize the maritime towns of Istria; and finally, after twice attacking Constantinople, they deposed the heir of Alexis Comnenus, and installed the Count of Flanders as Emperor of the East.

Meanwhile the Syrian Christians were by a tragical accident deprived of the king under whose auspices they had been left by Cœur de Lion. One day, while standing at a window of his palace and watching the movements of troops, Henry of Champagne fell to the ground and was killed on the spot. The widow

of the unfortunate man gave her hand to Almeric de Lusignan, who had succeeded Guy as king of Cyprus. But both Almeric and his spouse soon went the way of all flesh; and the Christians of the East sent to the court of France to offer the crown of Jerusalem, and the hand of a daughter of whom Isabel had made Conrad of Montferrat the father, to any warrior who would undertake to defend them against the Saracens.

When the ambassadors reached the court of Paris, in search of a knight who would espouse the heiress of Jerusalem and save what yet remained of the kingdom, John de Brienne, an aristocratic adventurer, joyfully placed himself at their service; and, attended by three hundred French gentlemen, he forthwith set out for the East. On reaching Acre, he celebrated his marriage with the daughter of Conrad; and prepared to defend her territories. Finding, however, that he could hardly answer for the security of Acre, he sent messengers to the Pope imploring aid. At that time, however, the Pope was too earnestly occupied with his war against the Albigenses to care about the Moslems; and the warriors, whom a spirit of adventure might otherwise have tempted to the East, found full employment in Languedoc and Provence.

At length, in 1215, a council was held to consider the affairs of the East; and the warriors of Europe were urged to precipitate themselves once more on

Asia. Multitudes took the cross; and marched eastward under the King of Hungary and the Duke of Austria. Indeed they appeared so numerous on landing at Acre, that the Saracens heard of their coming with serious alarm.

At the head of the host of armed pilgrims, John de Brienne marched from Acre, and attacked Mount Tabor, which Saladin had fortified in such a way as to be a perpetual menace. When on the point of victory, however, the crusaders were seized with panic and made a precipitate retreat. Soon after the King of Hungary returned to Europe; but John de Brienne, reinforced by new arrivals, undertook an expedition to the banks of the Nile, and sat down before Damietta.

Damietta, destined to become so famous in connection with the crusades, stood on the northern bank of the second mouth of the Nile, about a mile from the sea, and was strongly fortified. Nevertheless, after a siege of nineteen months, the crusaders were successful in taking the city, and, elate with success, marched to Cairo. In alarm, the Sultan prepared to treat; and not only offered to yield Jerusalem to the Christians, but to allow them to remain in possession of Damietta. The papal legate, however, said "No," and the Moslem ambassadors carried his answer to the Sultan.

Ere long, the crusaders, after having been a month at Cairo, were startled by the overflowing of the

Nile, and soon found themselves in a ludicrously dismal plight. It appeared, in fact, that the Saracens, opening their sluices, had filled the canals; and the Christian camp, deluged by water, was in such danger of being submerged, that the legate had to undergo the humiliation of applying to the Sultan for forbearance. Ambassadors, going to the Moslem camp, in the name of humanity craved peace, offered to surrender Damietta, and only asked to be allowed to return to Aere. After deliberating, the Moslem chiefs agreed; and the armed pilgrims sadly and sorrowfully marched back to Syria.

Intelligence of the catastrophe at Cairo reached Rome; and the Pope upbraided Frederick the Second, Emperor of Germany, for having been the idle spectator of a struggle, in which he had solemnly promised to take part. In order to give the Emperor a motive for proceeding to the Holy Land, the Pope proposed that he should wed Yolande, daughter of John de Brienne, and the marriage was celebrated at Rome, the father of the bride taking part in the ceremony. John de Brienne was, at first, quite delighted at the idea of having so great a potentate for son-in-law; but ere long he was mortified to hear the German Cæsar proclaimed king of Jerusalem, and to find himself set aside as of no consequence.

While such was the position of the Christian kingdom, the Sultan of Cairo sent ambassadors to

the Emperor of Germany, with an invitation to come to the East. Frederiek, on his part, returned a most courteous answer, and soon after embarked with six hundred knights. The Pope, who meanwhile had quarrelled with Frederiek, denounced him as a captain of pirates, and prayed heaven to confound his sacrilegious enterprise. Nevertheless, the Emperor pursued his voyage, and reaching the Syrian coast in safety, sailed triumphantly into the port of Aere.

Scarcely had the Sultan of Cairo been informed of the Emperor's arrival, when he led an army into Palestine; and Frederiek, marching out of Aere, directed his course towards the mountains of Naplouse. But matters gradually reached such a stage, that the Emperor and the Sultan recognised the necessity of immediately concluding a peace. A truce for ten years was agreed upon. Jerusalem was, with Nazareth and other places, given up to the Christians; the Moslems stipulating for the free exercise of their religion and for retaining the mosque of Omar.

Both by Christians and Saracens, the treaty was deemed disgraceful. Frederiek, however, hastened to make his public entry into the city which he had recovered. Accompanied by his barons, he, in the spring of 1229, repaired to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, placed the crown of Jerusalem on his head, and proclaimed himself king. The scene was remarkable. The monks, pretending to be scandalised, had deserted the sacred edifice, and no re-

ligious ceremony gave impressiveness to Frederick's coronation. But when the Emperor crowned himself, lances and swords appeared around the altar; and, when he was proclaimed king, enthusiastic acclamations from mailed warriors indicated their resolution to support him to the last.

After his coronation at Jerusalem, Frederick returned to Germany; the Holy City lay almost at the mercy of the Saracens; and Europe became indifferent to its fate. The feud of Pope and Emperor monopolised attention; while sympathy for the unhappy plight of the Latin empire of Constantinople, which was not destined to endure, allured thither many warriors, who would otherwise have drawn their swords for the Sepulchre.

It is true that expeditions to the East were preached by popes and undertaken by princes; but the results were not satisfactory. In 1239, Theobald, King of Navarre, conducted a band of warriors to Acre, and fought a battle with the Saracens at Gaza, where his followers perished almost to a man. In 1240, Richard, Earl of Cornwall, brother of our third Henry, appeared in Syria; but he found the discord among the Christians so discouraging, that he was fain to conclude a treaty with the Sultan and return to Europe.

Meanwhile Jerusalem, without fortifications, was perpetually exposed to danger. The peasants of the mountains of Naplouse kept the Christian inhabitants

in continual dread of attack ; and the great bell of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre frequently gave warning of the approach of foes, eager for carnage and plunder. Beset with perils, encompassed with difficulties, and well nigh hopeless of further aid from Europe, the Christians of the East, about the middle of the thirteenth century, found themselves in sight of ruin, and on the verge of despair.

Such was their situation when, in 1238, Melikul-Adil, the seventh Sultan of Saladin's line, succeeded ; but he had scarcely reigned two years, when his subjects were thoroughly disgusted with his gross debauchery. He soon lost popularity ; and the Egyptians, exasperated, called his brother, Melikul-Salih, to the throne. Scarcely was the latter crowned, when a Moslem prince seized Damascus, formed an alliance with the Christians, and the Sultan, unable to maintain himself without aid, looked around for allies.

It happened that the Tartars had just seized Karismia, and the Karismians, a wild race, finding themselves without a country, applied to the Sultan. Melikul-Salih, considering how valuable the weapons of the expatriated warriors might be, proposed that they should march against the Christians.

On receiving the Sultan's offer, the Karismians rejoicing in the prospect of plunder, assembled to the number of twenty thousand ; and, bringing their women and children in their train, marched towards Jerusalem. Having ravaged Tripoli and Galilee, on

their way, they ere long approached the devoted city. No feeling of mercy was at their hearts. Indeed, the Karismians neither gave nor asked quarter. Before going into conflict, they were in the habit of receiving a brief order from their leader. It was—"You will conquer or die."

Jerusalem was in no condition to defy such assailants. Some attempts were being made to restore the fortifications; but the walls were still too weak to stand a siege; and the warriors in the Holy City were too few in number to resist with any prospect of success. When the smoke of burning villages announced the approach of the foe, most of the inhabitants of Jerusalem resolved to be gone. No time was lost. Placing themselves under the guidance of the Templars and Hospitallers, seven thousand persons abandoned the city. They had just left the city by one side, when the foe entered it by the other.

The Karismians were somewhat disappointed to find Jerusalem almost deserted. Becoming aware, however, of the state of matters, they determined on a stratagem for luring back the fugitives. Without delay, they raised the banner of the cross on every tower; and set a-ringing all the bells of the Holy City. The trick had the desired effect. No sooner did the Christians, who were slowly and sadly making their way towards Jaffa, hear of the Christian standard floating over the walls of Jeru-

salem, than, persuading themselves that the Karismians had either marched in another direction or miraculously suffered a defeat, they hastened to retrace their steps.

On entering the Holy City, the Christians discovered, when too late, how they had been deluded. Every one of them was mercilessly slaughtered; and blood flowed in streams down the hilly streets. No respect was paid to age, or sex, or place. Nuns, children, and old people, who had fled for refuge to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, were slaughtered at the foot of the altar. Tombs were opened. The bodies of heroes were burned; the relics of saints and martyrs were scattered to the wind; and night closed over such a scene of carnage and desolation, as, in all her fortunes, Jerusalem had never before witnessed.

BOOK THIRD.

THE EXPEDITION OF ST. LOUIS

CHAPTER I.

THE SAINT-KING.

ABOUT the year 1215, when the Pope was impressing on Christendom the necessity of arming to save the Holy Sepulchre, Poissy witnessed the birth of a prince, destined to associate his name indissolubly with the crusades. At that place, on the Festival of St. Mark, Blanche of Castille, wife of Louis the Eighth, King of France, became a mother; and the heir then born to the house of Capet, ascended the French throne on his father's death, with the title of Louis the Ninth.

Louis, when thus left fatherless, had hardly attained his eleventh year; and he was in no condition to maintain himself against the great feudatories of the French crown. But Providence had blessed the young King with a mother who, whatever her fail-

ings, had a high spirit and a strong will ; and Queen Blanche not only maintained the rights of the French monarchy, but brought up her son with the most considerate care. She placed him under the charge of excellent masters, caused him to be attended by religious men, who, on Sundays and fast-days, preached to him the word of God ; and manifested an ardent ambition that he should live a holy and virtuous life. "I would rather," she was often heard to say, "see my son in the grave than that he should commit a mortal sin."

Educated under the auspices of such a mother, Louis, as years passed over, became celebrated among contemporary princes for his sanctity. He ever lived as if conscious that the eye of his Maker was upon him, and passed most of his time in devotional exercises. Every morning he heard prayers chanted, and a mass of requiem and the service of the day sung ; every afternoon, he was in the habit of reclining on his couch, and, with one of his chaplains, repeating prayers for the dead ; and every evening he made a point of hearing complines.

At the time when Louis was attending, with conscientious regularity, to his religious duties, the Saint-king was not negligent of those that devolved upon him as a sovereign. One day, when he was at the castle of Hieres, a Cordelier friar approached. "Sire," said he, "I have read in the Bible, and other good books, of unbelieving princes ; yet I never found a

kingdom of believers or unbelievers ruined but from the want of justice being duly administered. Now let the King, who I perceive is going to France, be careful to administer justice, that our Lord may suffer him to enjoy his kingdom, and that it may remain in peace and tranquillity all the days of his life."

The words of the Cordelier sunk deep into the King's heart; and, from that date, it appears that Louis devoted much attention to the administration of justice. Sometimes in summer time, after saying mass, he would repair to the gardens of his palace, and seating himself on a carpet, listen to those who wished to appeal to him; and, at other times, he would betake himself to the wood of Vincennes, and, reclining under the shadow of an oak, devote himself to the decision of causes with exemplary diligence. All who had complaints to make might come on such occasions; and no ceremony was permitted that could keep the poor from the justice-seat of the King.

While showing his devotion to his God and his neighbour, Louis entertained no insuperable aversion to buckling on the mail of a warrior; and when he mounted his steed and laid his lance in rest, his foes found him "no carpet knight." It happened that, in 1242, the Counts De la Marche and De Foix, growing malecontent, formed a confederacy against the throne; and invited Henry, King of England, to regain the provinces taken by Philip Augustus from Henry's father, King John. The confederacy seemed most

formidable ; and the English monarch, allured by the prospect of recovering Normandy and Anjou, crossed the sea with an army, and prepared for hostilities. But Louis was not to be daunted. Girding on his mail, he placed himself at the head of an army, and appeared to offer his allied adversaries battle on the banks of the Charente, near the bridge of Taillebourg.

The courage of Louis produced a striking effect on his adversaries. The confederates found they had mistaken their man ; and Henry, accusing the Count De la Marche of having deceived him, fled, without drawing rein, to the village of Saintonge. Louis, however, pursued ; and, the English turning to bay, a fierce conflict took place. But the armies were quite unequal. Though the barons of England fought with desperate valour, they were soon worsted ; and, to save his life, Henry, hotly pursued by Louis, was under the necessity of flying to Bordeaux. From this period, it was perfectly understood that the Saint-king could hold his own ; and neither French counts nor foreign princes relished the idea of provoking his vengeance.

When Louis had reached the age of nineteen, Queen Blanche became anxious to find a bride worthy of sharing the French throne ; and, for reasons of state, cast her eye wistfully towards the family of Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence. Raymond, who was a cadet of the royal family of Arragon, had

early won fame as the most accomplished man in Europe, and married Beatrice, daughter of the Count of Savoy, a princess with "thought, feeling, taste, harmonious to his own." Five daughters, all destined to be queens, had sprung from this union; and Margaret of Provence, the eldest of these, was just six years younger than Louis. Blanche found little difficulty in securing the hand of Raymond's daughter for her son; and, without delay, the Provençal Princess appeared in Paris as Queen of France.

But ladies are capricious: and royal ladies are in this respect like their neighbours. No sooner was Margaret of Provence brought to her new home, than Blanche of Castille became apprehensive that the young wife might terminate the influence she had hitherto exercised over the Saint-king. The Queen-dowager, however, had no idea of allowing her power to be imperilled. On one pretext or another, she resolved to keep the royal pair separate; and nothing could exceed the tyranny which, with this view, she exercised over their movements. When the two Queens made royal progresses with the King through his dominions, Blanche always took care that Louis and Margaret should lodge in different houses; and even in cases of sickness the mother-in-law did not relent. On one occasion, when the court was at Pointoise, and Margaret lay in danger of death, Louis stole to her chamber. While he was there, Blanche entered, bent her brow, shook her head, and, taking

the intruder by the shoulder, turned him out of the room.

"Go along, sir," said she sternly, pushing him away from the door; "you can do no good here."

"Alas, madam," said Margaret, her heart sickening as she spoke, "will you not allow me to see my lord either when I am living or when I am dying?"

Such was the intolerable domestic tyranny under which the Saint-king and his fair spouse were living, when circumstances fired one with the idea of undertaking a crusade, and gave the other a fair excuse for escaping from the termagant mother-in-law of whom she had been the victim.

CHAPTER II.

FRANCE IN MOTION.

WHEN, in 1244, the sack of Jerusalem by the Karismians took place, most of the princes of Christendom were too much occupied with their own affairs to concern themselves particularly about the Holy Sepulchre. The Emperor of Germany was struggling with the Pope; the King of England was battling with his barons; the King of Castille was contending with the Moors; the King of Denmark was at war with his own brother; the King of Sweden was at feud with the house of Tolckunger; and the King of Poland was exerting all his strength to resist the inroads of Tartar hordes. France alone was at peace and in a condition to send forth warriors to the East; and it was from France, that an answer was vouchsafed to the cry of distress that reached Europe from Asia.

It happened that, when news of the sack of Jerusalem reached Paris, Louis the Ninth was suffering from illness. Gradually becoming worse, the King ere long reached such a state of prostration, that his

recovery was despaired of: and his attendants were at times in doubt whether he was dead or alive. As if by a miracle, however, he was snatched from the gates of death; and the first use he made of his faculties, was to order a cross to be attached to his vestments. On seeing her son wearing the cross, Queen Blanche was terrified—"struck as fearfully," says the chronicler, "as if she had seen him dead." The truth was, that, in gratitude for his unexpected recovery, the Saint-king had vowed to undertake an expedition for the recovery of the Sepulchre.

The resolution of the King was the reverse of agreeable either to his family or his subjects, and earnest attempts were made to divert him from his purpose. But, during his illness, his imagination had been affected in the highest degree; and his enthusiasm was much too ardent to be restrained. Steadfastly clinging to the idea, which haunted him while under the influence of fever, he formally took the cross, and sent intelligence to the East, that he was assembling an army, with which to cross the sea.

While the King of France was thus expressing his resolution to undertake a crusade, a Cardinal, as papal legate, arrived to publish a decree of the celebrated Council of Lyons, respecting the Holy Land. After the crusade had been preached in the churches of the kingdom, Louis summoned a parliament at Paris; and the Cardinal having first addressed the assembled peers and prelates, the King reminded

them of the expeditions of Louis the Seventh and Philip Augustus, and appealed to them, as Christians and gentlemen, to take part in the expedition.

As the King finished his speech, his brothers, Robert, Count of Artois, Alphonse, Count of Poitiers, and Charles, Count of Anjou, stepped forward and took the cross; and Queen Margaret, the Countess of Artois, and the Countess of Poitiers, followed the example of their husbands. At the same time, the Duke of Burgundy, the Count of Brittany, the Count de Soissons, the Count de la Marche, Sir Peter de Montfort, the Lord of Courtenay, and many other French magnates, swore to accompany their King.

Matters having reached this stage, preparations commenced; and Louis set himself to provide the means of going to the East. It appears that, to defray the cost of his expedition, the King applied to the Pope; and the Pope granted him a tenth of the clergy's revenues for three years. This tax was somewhat rigorously levied; and one poor priest, who only enjoyed twenty shillings of annual income, had to pay two yearly. Complaints from the clergy were heard on all hands; and laymen remarked, with a chuckle, that the estates of the clergy were shorn as bare as their crowns.

Notwithstanding the zeal displayed by Louis, preparations went on slowly; and three years passed ere he was in a position to leave France. Before depart-

ing, he convoked a second parliament; and, having made the peers and prelates swear loyalty to his family, in the event of his not returning, he repaired to St. Denis, and, from the hands of the legate, received the pilgrim's staff and scrip, and the oriflamme of France.

This ceremony over, Louis left Paris, to proceed to Aigrus-Mortes, which he had appointed as the place of embarkation. At Lyons, the Pope appeared to give the King his blessing; and Louis made an effort to reconcile the Pope and the Emperor. The Pope, however, refused to listen to the King's mediation; and Louis gave way to a false scruple, which proved the cause of severe calamities.

The truth was, that the safety of the French army much depended on the route selected; and the safest way to the Holy Land was understood to be through Sicily. Unluckily, however, Sicily was subject to the Empire; and the Emperor was under excommunication by the Pope; and Louis feared to set his foot in a land under ban. He therefore resolved upon a great sacrifice; and, instead of passing through Sicily to Syria, announced his intention of proceeding by way of Cyprus, into Egypt.

At Aigrus-Mortes, Louis had caused a harbour to be constructed; and there his fleet awaited him. Having embarked about the end of August, 1248, with his Queen, and the Counts of Artois and Anjou, Louis set sail for Cyprus, and after a voyage

of four weeks, landed at Limisso, from which, sixty years earlier, Richard King of England, had, battle-axe in hand, chased the Emperor Isaac.

Louis, however, had no occasion to emulate the prowess of Cœur de Lion; for a Christian king, surrounded by Christian barons, now reigned over Cyprus; and the reception of the saintly crusader was all that could have been wished. After being welcomed at Limisso by Henry de Lusignan, sovereign of the island, he proceeded to Nicosia, and, having entered that capital amid the cheers of the clergy, nobles, and people, he awaited the arrival of his friends and followers.

CHAPTER III.

THE EARLS OF SALISBURY AND DUNBAR.

WHILE King Louis was making preparations in France for his expedition to the Holy Land, England did not remain altogether indifferent to what was passing on the Continent. Many of the Anglo-Norman knights exhibited a desire to take part in an adventure, from which so much glory was anticipated; and, if the King had encouraged the movement, a noble host would have left our shores. But Henry the Third, short-sighted as usual, kept the barons at home to fight against the crown; and not only warned his subjects not to take the cross, but forbade the preaching of a crusade in his kingdom.

The English barons had never been disposed to regard their sovereign's word as law; and, though the King's prohibition prevented any general movement, several took the cross, and declared their determination of going to fight the infidels. Of these, the most renowned was a great earl, nearly but illegitimately connected with the royal house.

Among the barons of England, at the opening of

the thirteenth century, few were more conspicuous than the eldest of the two sons whom "fair Rosamond" bore to the first of our Plantagenet kings. Gifted by his sire with the earldom of Salisbury, and united in marriage to Hela Devereux, an heiress of that Norman race whose chiefs in after-ages fought at Bosworth and Edgehill, this stalwart warrior flourished till the year 1226, and dying left a son, the heir of his name, his earldom, and his valour.

William, second Earl of Salisbury, surnamed "Longsword," soon became even more famous than his sire, and proved his courage, in a remarkable manner, on that day when the warriors of England fought against fearful odds at the village of Saintonge. At the time when Richard, Earl of Cornwall, went to Palestine, Longsword appears to have taken the cross; and no sooner did he learn that King Louis had resolved on an "armed pilgrimage," than he again assumed the sacred badge, along with Robert de Vere and Geoffrey Lucy.

Henry was not the man to submit tamely to this contempt for his authority. Immediately resolving on strong measures, he seized Salisbury's earldom and castles; and the Earl found himself at his wits' end for money. But Longsword was not to be baffled. Without hesitation he repaired to Rome; and, craving an interview with the Pope, frankly explained the dilemma in which he found himself.

"My Lord," said the Earl, on being admitted to

the presence of his Holiness, "you see that I have taken the cross, and am ready to join the French King in his pilgrimage, and to fight for God. I bear a great name, and one well known, namely, William Longsword. But my property is small: for the King, my kinsman and liege lord, has taken from me my title of earl and all my substance. This, however, he did judiciously—not in his anger or any violence of self-will: therefore I do not blame him. I am obliged to fly to your paternal bosom in this necessity; and if the Earl of Cornwall has been able to obtain, without taking the cross, the privilege of levying a tax upon those who have laid it down, I have thought that I might obtain a similar favour—I, who have no resource but the charity of the faithful."

The Pope listened with attention to the Earl's speech. In fact, the grandeur of Longsword's aspect could not fail to make an impression; and his eloquence was such as to justify the boast that Norman gentlemen were orators from their cradles. After musing for a moment, the Pope smiled, and informed the eloquent warrior that his petition was granted.

Salisbury, having succeeded so far, returned to England, and made all arrangements. Before leaving the country, he proceeded to the abbey of Lacock to take leave of his mother, who was abbess of that religious house. The abbess then gave the Earl her blessing; and Longsword bade adieu to his mother, whom he was not destined to see again.

At length, early in the spring of 1249, Salisbury set forward on his expedition, and sailed from England. The mandate of Henry had prevented any general movement among the great barons; and the Bigods and Bohuns remained to worry him at Westminster, and to fight against him at Lewes. Nevertheless, Longsword was nobly attended when he embarked to join the Saint-king of France. Robert de Vere carried the Earl's banner; and with him went two hundred English knights, of noble name and dauntless courage, sworn to bring that banner back with glory, or dye it with their hearts' blood.

But if Louis had not the company of many Anglo-Norman barons, whose military genius made them such formidable war-chiefs, he could boast of being attended by the most illustrious patrician who sprang from the Anglo-Saxon race. While Salisbury and his friends were leaving the English shores, there might have been seen sailing out of the beautiful bay of Belhaven some ships of war with a lion-argent painted on the sails. This was the fleet of Patriek, Earl of Dunbar, a venerable warrior, whose spear had often drunk deep of Celtic gore, while exerting himself, like all the chiefs of his line, to establish law and spread civilisation north of the Tweed.

At the time when King Louis announced his intention of going to the East, Earl Patriek had long passed the age of threescore. But though his hair was white and his limbs stiff, the Earl's head was still as

clear, his heart as valiant, and his spirit as adventurous, as in the days of his youth. Chroniclers tell that he was anxious, ere being laid among his ancestors in the convent of Eccles, to make his peace with God for some roughness of which he had been guilty towards the monks of Tynemouth. Perhaps, also, he wished to associate his renowned name with the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. No sooner, at all events, did he hear of a new crusade, than he determined to participate in its perils and glories.

Earl Patrick had not to contend with such difficulties as beset the path of William Longsword. His substance was immense, and his independence was equal to his substance. "I am lord of mine own," was the language of his grandson; "as free to reign in this land of mine as ever was prince or king." Nobody was likely to interfere with the Earl's movements: so the heir of Cospatrick sold his stud on the Leader Haughs to defray his expenses; took a last farewell of Euphemia Stewart, his aged countess; received the pilgrim's staff and scrip from the abbot of Melrose; embarked with his knights and kinsmen, and fared forth to couch, against the enemies of Christianity, that spear that had so often been dyed red in the blood of the enemies of civilisation

CHAPTER IV.

THE KING AND THE CHRONICLER.

AMONG the barons whom Louis the Ninth summoned to Paris, to renew their homage to him and swear loyalty to his children, was the Sieur de Joinville, destined to be known as chronicler of the crusade.

Joinville was chief of a noble family in Champagne, and appears, at this time, to have been approaching the age of thirty. Some years earlier, he had succeeded his father as seneschal of Champagne, and espoused a daughter of the Count de Grand Pré. He seems, however, to have been a widower when Louis assumed the cross, and in no degree disinclined to take part in an expedition to the East. Accordingly, when the crusade was proclaimed throughout France, he assumed the cross and prepared to accompany Louis to Palestine. He did not, however, comply with the King's request to renew his fealty. "He summoned me also," says Joinville; "but I, who was not his subject, would not take the oath. Besides, it was not my intention to remain behind."

After making his preparations, and indulging in

a week of feasting with his friends and kinsmen, Joinville prepared to be gone. Ere setting out, he sent for the abbot of Cheminon; and having received from the hand of that holy man the scarf and staff, he made pilgrimages to several places in the vicinity, barefoot and in his shirt. His vow did not admit of any return to his own castle; but the temptation would seem to have been strong. "As I was journeying from Blicourt to St. Urban," he says, "I was obliged to pass near the castle of Joinville. I dared never turn my eyes in that way, for fear of feeling too great regret, and lest my courage should fail on leaving my two fine children, and my fair castle of Joinville, which I loved in my heart."

Having joined company with two of his kinsmen, the Seneschal departed from Champagne; and the three brothers-in-arms, with their knights and attendants, embarked on the Soane for Lyons; while their war-steeds and cavalry travelled along the banks of the river. On reaching Lyons, they proceeded in the same way by the Rhône to Arles le Blanc, and in August, 1248, reached Marseilles.

On arriving at Marseilles, Joinville and his friends hired a ship; and embarked at that port with their men and horses. All their courage was necessary to enable them to encounter the dangers of the sea; but the priests having chanted psalms in God's praise, and the crusaders sung the "Veni Creator," they committed themselves to Providence. The skipper

Then ordered the mariners to set the sails; and a breeze carrying them from the shores of France, the knights observed, with mysterious awe, that no other objects but the sea and the sky were visible.

After suffering much from sea-sickness, Joinville landed at Cyprus, and found that King Louis had reached that island. The Seneschal's difficulties immediately commenced. "On my arrival at Cyprus," he says, "I had but twelve score livres in gold and silver, after paying the freight of the ship, so that many of my knights told me they would leave me, if I did not better provide myself with money. I was somewhat cast down in courage on hearing this, but had ever my confidence in God; and, when the good King St. Louis heard of my distress, he sent for me, and retained me in his service, allowing me, like a kind lord, eight hundred livres Tournois. I instantly returned thanks to God."

No sooner was Joinville presented to Louis, than an intimacy sprung up between them; and the Seneschal of Champagne became one of the men whom the King of France delighted to honour. Joinville, it is true, had about him little of the courtier, and was not quite so saintly in theory or practice as Louis could have wished. He had, however, the merit of being thoroughly honest, and of resisting every temptation to affect a degree of piety which he did not feel.

"Seneschal," said Louis one day at Cyprus, "I marvel that you do not mix water with your wine."

"Sire," said Joinville, "physicians have told me that as I have a large head and a cold stomach, the water might prove injurious."

"Ah!" exclaimed Louis, "believe me, they have deceived you. Be advised; for if you do not begin to drink water till you are in the decline of life, you will increase any disorders you may then have; and if you take pure wine in your old age, you will frequently be intoxicated; and verily it is a beastly thing for an honourable man to make himself drunk."

"Whether would you be a leper, Seneschal, or have committed, or be about to commit, a deadly sin?" asked the King on another occasion, when two friars were present.

"Rather than be a leper, Sire," exclaimed Joinville, "I would have committed thirty deadly sins."

"How could you make such an answer to my question?" asked Louis, upbraidingly, when the friars were gone.

"Sire," replied Joinville, "were I to answer again, I should repeat the same thing."

"Ah!" said Louis, "you deceive yourself on the subject, for you know there can be no leprosy so filthy as deadly sin, and the soul that is guilty of such is like the devil in hell."

"And pray, Seneschal," demanded Louis after a

pause, "do you wash the feet of the poor on Holy Thursdays?"

"Oh, Sire, no!" cried Joinville; "and never will I wash the feet of such fellows."

"This is, in truth, very ill said," remarked Louis, shaking his head. "For you should never hold in disdain what God did for our instruction. I therefore beg that you will, first out of love to Him, and then from regard to me, accustom yourself to do so."

With such conversations the winter passed over at Cyprus, Joinville quaffing his wine without water, and Louis expatiating on the perils of such indulgence. At length March arrived; and the King embarked with the Queen and their household. Joinville, with the other crusaders, prepared to tempt the seas once more, but not without a vague kind of terror. "I must say," he remarks, "that he is a great fool who puts himself in such danger, having wronged any one, or having any mortal sin on his conscience; for, when he goes to sleep in the evening, he knows not if, in the morning, he may not find himself under the sea."

CHAPTER V.

THE CAPTURE OF DAMIETTA.

ON the Saturday before Pentecost, eighteen hundred vessels, comprising the fleet of St. Louis, most of whose friends had ere this met him at Cyprus, issued gallantly from the port of Limisso, and sailed towards Egypt. "It was a pleasant sight to sec," says Joinville; "for it seemed as if the whole sea, as far as the sight could reach, was covered with cloth, from the great quantity of sails that were spread to the wind."

The voyage of the crusaders did not, however, prove prosperous. At first, indeed, all was promising. But suddenly the wind changed, and blew violently from the coast of Egypt. In vain the Genoese mariners exerted their skill. The fleet was completely dispersed; and when Louis, putting back, reached Limisso, he discovered, with mortification, that scarcely one-third of the ships remained in his company.

The King, who supposed the companions of his voyage had been drowned, was grieved beyond

measure. But consolation was luckily at hand. Fortunately, while Louis was bewailing the fate of his friends, the Earl of Salisbury and the Duke of Burgundy arrived; and Longsword, accustomed, ere he "had put on his helmet," to the narrow seas, felt none of that vague dread of "the blue above and the blue below," which made the French knights invoke the saints in Paradise when they embarked. The English Earl, in fact, was just the man for the crisis. He could tell how his own father, in returning from the Holy Land, had narrowly escaped shipwreck, and point out that, in all probability, the missing vessels were quite safe on the Syrian coast. Of course, his hardihood only made him enemies; and the French knights, who had been sinking under sea-sickness, trembling for their lives, and wishing themselves back in their own castles, cursed the brave Earl as the worst of "English tails."

Louis, however, became more composed; and, the morning of Monday being fine, he resolved to pursue his voyage. The wind proving favourable, the fleet made for the Egyptian coast, and at sunrise, on Thursday morning, the watch on deck shouted out "Land!" Some doubt appears to have been entertained; but this feeling was speedily dissipated by a pilot, who ascended to the round top of the vessel that led the van. "Gentlemen," he cried, "we are before Damietta; so we have nothing to do but recommend ourselves to God."

A cry of joy burst from a hundred lips: the words flew from deck to deck; and much excitement prevailed throughout the fleet. Immediately the leaders of the crusade hastened on board the King's vessel. "Gentlemen," said Louis, as he received them leaning on his sword, "let us be thankful that we are, at length, face to face with the enemies of Christ."

So far, indeed, as appearances went, the crusaders had reason to believe that they were on the eve of a desperate struggle. The mouth of the Nile was defended by a fleet and by formidable engines of war; an innumerable army of horsemen and footmen covered the shore, as if bent on contesting every inch of ground. At the head of this mighty force, armed in burnished gold, appeared the Emir Fakreddin, whose very name was terrible to Christians; and from the midst of the host, trumpets and drums sounded a stern defiance to the approaching foe.

No impression was produced by this display on the hearts of the crusaders. Undaunted by the evidence of great preparations, they steadily pursued their course; ship after ship moving calmly forward, and anchoring within a mile of the shore. Four galleys from the mouth of the Nile, advanced to reconnoitre the fleet; but three of them having been sunk, the fourth carried back intelligence that the crusaders were foes to be dreaded.

It was now necessary to form some plan of action; and a council of war was held on board the King's

ship. The general wish was to await the arrival of the crusaders from whom they had been separated by the tempest; but the drums and horns of the Saracens had chafed the Saint-king's pride, and he would not hear of delay. "We have not come here," he said, "to listen to the insults of enemies. Besides, we have no port in which to shelter from the wind. A second tempest may disperse what remains of our fleet. To-day, God offers us a victory: another day, he may punish us for having neglected to conquer." Nobody cared to debate the point with their King; and it was resolved that the crusaders should next morning disembark and give the Saracens battle. Meanwhile, strict watch was maintained; and some swift vessels were despatched towards the mouth of the Nile, to observe the motions of the enemy.

When Friday morning dawned, the Saracens still occupied the entire shore, presenting a front as formidable as on the previous day. Nevertheless, the crusaders prepared to land; and getting into their barks, formed into two lines and made for the shore. Nor did Louis, at that hour, appear in any respect unworthy of the regal race of which he was the chief. Preceded by the oriflamme, attended by his brothers, by his chosen knights, and by the papal legate, the King, in complete armour, with his helmet on his brow, his shield on his neck, and his lance in his hand, figured conspicuously on the right of his soldiers. Each of the barons and knights

stood erect in his boat, with his horse by his side, his lance in his hand, and his eyes directed to the shore. Crossbowmen were placed in front and on the wings of the army, to annoy and gall the eager foe.

For a time, the barks moved onward without opposition, and the crusaders drew near to the Egyptian strand. But no sooner were they within bow-shot of the shore, than a shower of arrows and javelins threw them into some slight disorder. Instantly, however, the crossbowmen retaliated on the foe, with a damaging flight of shafts; and the rowers redoubled their efforts to reach the shore. But by this time, the enthusiasm of the crusaders became intense; and the *Sieur de Joinville*, closely followed by *Baldwin de Rheims*, reached the shore. Seeing this, losing patience, and hardly waiting till the *oriflamme* was landed, *Louis* sprang from his boat, and leaping into the sea, which came up to his shoulders, struggled ashore, with a shout of "*Montjoie, St. Denis!*"

No sooner had the Christian King set foot on dry land, than he kneeled down and returned thanks to God, for having preserved him from the perils of the sea. On observing the *Saracens*, *Louis* appears to have become so excited, as to propose making an attack upon them forthwith. But the French knights interfered, and persuaded the King to wait patiently till the remainder of his army had landed.

It was well indeed for *Louis*, that he allowed

himself to be prevailed on; for, at that moment, the Saracen cavalry came down on the crusaders, with an impetuosity which convinced the French that their foes were somewhat formidable. But the valour of the Moslems met with a signal check. Hastily ordering the French to close their ranks, and cover themselves with their shields, Joinville and Baldwin of Rheims contrived to present so impenetrable a front, that the Saracens retired baffled.

But scarcely had this charge been repelled, when the Saracens made ready for a second attack; and King Louis, forming his army into order, prepared for resistance. A confused conflict now took place, and continued till several emirs had fallen. Fakreddin then withdrew his men; and, abandoning his camp, retreated to Damietta.

The King of France, after witnessing the retreat of the foe, ordered his pavilion, which was of bright red, to be set up, and caused the clergy to sing the *Te Deum*. The French warriors then pitched their tents around the King, and passed the night in rejoicing over their victory.

It soon appeared, that the crusaders were not aware of the full advantages they had gained. Before daybreak, however, columns of flame, rising from Damietta, intimated that something remarkable was occurring; and, when morning dawned, Louis despatched one of his knights to ascertain the cause. On reaching Damietta, the knight perceived that

the gates were open; and entering, he found the streets deserted and the houses abandoned. Returning at a gallop to the camp, he announced to the crusaders that Damietta might be won without a blow.

The King of France could hardly credit the report brought by his knight, but he gave orders for marching; and the army, moving slowly forward, without opposition took possession of Damietta. Having formed into procession, the King, the Cardinal, and a crowd of clergy, walked to the grand mosque, now converted into a Christian church, and sang psalms of praise.

This ceremony over, the crusaders established themselves in Damietta. The Queen, the Countess of Artois, and the other ladies, who, from their ships, had with breathless anxiety watched the landing of the French warriors, were conducted on shore, and lodged in the palaces of the city; five hundred knights were charged with the duty of guarding the ramparts and towers; the army encamped on the plain, outside the walls; and Louis only awaited the arrival of the crusaders, whom the tempest had driven on the Syrian coast, and of his brother, the Count of Poitiers, with the *arrière ban* of France, to undertake the great enterprise of conquering Egypt.

CHAPTER VI.

DISCORD AND DISORDER.

No sooner was King Louis established at Damietta, than he found himself in the midst of difficulties and discord.

After entering the city, the Saint-king resolved that no division of the spoil should be made; but that the provisions should be kept in magazines under the royal officers, and distributed gradually for the support of the army. This arrangement, being contrary to ancient custom, caused much discontent; and John de Valery, a baron of fame and influence, remonstrated warmly with the King. "Never, please God," he exclaimed, "will I consent to alter good customs, and such as our ancestors have followed in the Holy Land. Whenever any city or other considerable booty was taken from the enemy, the King never received more than one-third of the riches or goods; while the pilgrims received two-thirds." Louis, however, who wished to avoid the inconveniences that had resulted from the system of which John de Valery was the eulogist, remained firm; and

the French barons found some difficulty in digesting their discontent.

Disputes of a more serious kind ere long took place. At that time, there existed no great love between the French and English nobles; and the warriors of the continent were in the habit of treating the warriors of the island with undisguised contempt. In fact, the French had some reason to assume airs of superiority; for, during fifty years, they had been victorious in almost every struggle. On that point there could be no dispute. Philip Augustus had expelled King John from the continent; and Louis had chased King Henry from the bridge of Taillebourg to the gates of Bordeaux. Moreover, while France enjoyed some measure of ecclesiastical freedom, the Pope treated England as a conquered country, and talked contemptuously of the King as his vassal. Such being the case, the French were constantly vapouring about their prowess; and the wretched joke about Englishmen being born with tails, as a punishment for the murder of Thomas à Becket, was brought forward in season and out of season.

It must be stated that the English, to their credit, bore the taunts of their continental rivals with a degree of patience which has not always characterised their nation. Even in their humiliation, however, the island warriors could not have relished the disparaging remarks of which they were the

objects. It is true that forbearance would have cost them little, could they have foreseen at how early a date the tables were to be turned. A great change, in fact, was at hand; and the Plantagenet prince had already seen the light, who was to make popes, and princes, and peoples bow with awe before the name of England.

For some time, during the stay of the crusaders at Damietta, the English prudently refrained from resenting the insults of their allies. But, at the same time, they do not appear to have complied very readily with the regulations for the government of the camp; and the Earl of Salisbury, in some way, provoked the malignity of the Count of Artois. This, of course, led to such quarrels as none of the crusaders had skill sufficient to prevent. The Earl of Dunbar, indeed, with his sagacity and experience, might have acted successfully as mediator; but it would seem, that the old Scoto-Saxon warrior was among those who perished early in the expedition.*

While the Count of Artois and the Earl of Salis-

* "Earl Patrick also died, who was held to be the most powerful among the nobles of Scotland. This noble died bearing the symbol of the cross, while on a pilgrimage in company with the French King; and he is believed to have assumed the cross that he might become reconciled to God and St. Oswin; for he had harassed and unjustly injured the church of Tynemouth, a convent devoted to St. Alban, and the especial domicile of the blessed king and martyr Oswin."—*Matthew Paris's Chronicle*.

bury were on unfriendly terms, Longsword, growing weary of inactivity, and eager for change of scene, donned his chain mail, put on his surcoat, mounted his Flemish charger, and, at the head of his knights, dashed out of Damietta in quest of adventure. The novelty of everything around naturally raised the spirits of the English crusaders; and, panting for action, but not meeting with any enemy to oppose their progress, they laid siege to a castle before which they accidentally arrived. After a bold effort, Salisbury seized the place, and finding it occupied by "the wives of some noble Saracens," gave the alarmed ladies to understand that they were captives of his sword and spear, and brought them off to Damietta.

But the adventures of the English Earl were not ended. While conducting the Oriental beauties in triumph, Longsword fell in with a caravan on its way to Alexandria. Of course, no scruple about spoiling the infidel ever touched Longsword's conscience; so, putting the escort to the rout, he took possession of the caravan; and, congratulating himself on having obtained so noble a prize, continued his march to the crusaders' camp.

When Salisbury, on his strong charger, came riding at the head of his knights to Damietta, with Saracen ladies, and wagons drawn by oxen and buffaloes, and camels, mules, and asses laden with gold and silver, and silks and paintings, much envy was excited.

Perhaps the English did not bear their good fortune quite meekly. In any case, the French gradually became exasperated; and, after some high words had passed, they carried off part of Longsword's booty by force.

On learning what had occurred, and deeming that he had been both insulted and injured, Salisbury hastened to the royal pavilion. Louis was then holding a council; and the English Earl entering, presented himself to the most Christian King.

"Sir King," said Longsword, bluntly, "I took the cross, and came from a distant country to aid you in the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. I and my countrymen have fought as faithfully for God's cause as any man in your army. Nevertheless, we have been exposed to intolerable insults and injuries. I come here to lay before you my complaint against your brother, the Count of Artois, who is the head and chief offender; and I promise, that if I am in the wrong, I will give every satisfaction for my fault."

"William Longsword," said Louis, gravely, "the Lord, who is ignorant of nothing, is aware of the injuries you have sustained. But what can I do? You know how serious an affair it would be for me to offend any of my nobles in the position in which I now am."

"What do you mean, my Lord King?" asked the Count of Artois, who at that moment entered

abruptly, flushed and excited. "Do you defend this Englishman and oppose your own Frenchmen?"

"Now, Longsword," said Louis, turning his face to the English Earl, "you hear how easily a quarrel might originate; and God forbid that it should occur in this army. It is necessary, at such a crisis, to endure such things, and even worse things than these, with equanimity."

"Then, Sir," exclaimed Longsword, giving way to indignation, "call yourself no longer King, since you have no longer the power to administer justice or to punish offenders."

"Frenchmen! what madness excites you? Why do you persecute this man?" asked Louis reproachfully.

"I do it," cried the Count of Artois, "because I believe the French army would be well purged of these tailed English!"

But the Count's words were echoed by none of the King's councillors. All men of judgment and experience shook their heads, and intimated, in a manner not to be mistaken, their disapproval of what he had said.

"This is a serious matter," they observed, not even deigning to answer the fool according to his folly. "It is a sad presage of future events; and well will it be if the heavy anger of the Most High is not provoked by such offence."

The quarrel between the Earl of Salisbury and

the Count of Artois, was not the only unfortunate circumstance connected with the stay of the French at Damietta. In fact, the utmost disorder prevailed in the camp. Quarrels and brawls occurred daily and hourly. The crusaders, left to inactivity, appeared to forget the solemn oaths they had taken, and spent their time in riot and debauchery. A spirit of gambling and wantonness took possession of the army encamped under the standard of Christ. The rattle of the dice-box was constantly heard throughout the camp. Men with the cross of Christ on their shoulder, had the name of the devil perpetually on their tongues; and women, lost to womanly feeling, plied the most iniquitous of all trades in the immediate vicinity of the Saint-king's pavilion.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EMIR FAKREDDIN.

THE flight of the Emir Fakreddin from Damietta, and the occupation of that city by the crusaders, threw the empire of the Sultan into convulsions.

At the time when the crusaders landed at Damietta, Melikul-Salih had the misfortune to be under the influence of a malady, which physicians pronounced incurable; and he was, of course, precluded from any active part in the steps taken to defend his dominions. When, however, pigeons conveyed to Cairo intelligence of the French King's success and Fakreddin's flight, the Sultan roused himself to energy. Breaking into a violent rage, he instantly sentenced about fifty of the principal fugitives to be executed, and would listen to none of the excuses made for their flight. "You deserve death for having quitted Damietta without my orders," was his answer to every attempt they made to justify themselves. One man, who had been condemned to die with a son whom he dearly loved, entreated that, at least, he should be allowed to suffer first. But the Sultan was

inexorable : and the father had to endure the misery of seeing his son executed before his eyes.

While Melikul-Salih was in this sanguinary mood, Fakreddin was summoned to his presence, and received with ominous anger.

“ What resistance have you made, and what battles have you fought ? ” asked the Sultan in a rage ?

“ I have both made resistance and fought battles,” answered Fakreddin calmly.

“ These French,” said the Sultan, “ must indeed be something very terrible, since men like you could not support their presence for one day.”

While this conversation was going on, the emirs present, trembling for Fakreddin’s safety, intimated by a gesture their readiness to save him by killing the Sultan. But Fakreddin shook his head. “ The Sultan,” he whispered, “ cannot live many days ; and, if he gives trouble, we can at any time get rid of him.”

Without driving matters to extremity, Melikul-Salih caused himself to be removed to Mansourah ; and, on reaching that city, expended his last strength in rallying the troops and strengthening the fortifications. At the same time, he sent soldiers to attack the crusaders in their camp, and promised a golden bezant for the head of every Christian brought to his dying couch. The Arab cavalry of the desert, and some Karismian horsemen, saved from the ruin of the army that sacked Jerusalem, were employed on this

service; and exerted so much ingenuity in their approaches, that sentinel after sentinel disappeared from his post, and knight after knight was killed while asleep in his tent.

At length Malikul-Salih breathed his last at Mansourah; and as Touran-Chah, son of the departed Sultan, was then in Mesopotamia, the emirs became apprehensive of the most serious troubles. But the favourite Sultana, a woman of great ability, suggested the policy of concealing her husband's death till his successor should arrive; and this counsel being acted on, prevented any serious consequences. Orders were still issued in the Sultan's name; prayers for his recovery were offered up in the churches; and Mamelukes occupied their usual post at the palace gates, as if guarding his life.

But, notwithstanding such precautions, suspicions were aroused, and the truth ere long began to ooze out. This was of itself sufficient to create consternation; and soon another circumstance added to the panic. Rumours, carried to Mansourah, that the French, having left Damietta, were marching up the banks of the Nile, caused every cheek to grow pale; and, on being conveyed to Cairo, excited such terror and dismay as had seldom before been exhibited in the capital of Egypt.

At this crisis, Fakreddin showed a courage worthy of the fame he had won by his military exploits, and called upon the Saracens to sacrifice their lives and

fortunes for the sake of their religion and their country. "In the name of God, and Mahomet, his prophet," said the Emir, "hasten, great and small, for the cause of God has need of your arms and your wealth;" and his proclamation was read daily at the hour of prayer in the grand mosque at Cairo. But the people of the capital only answered with sighs and groans. A few of the more courageous, indeed, left for Mansourah to fight; but the majority only thought of flying farther from enemies against whom they despaired of defending themselves.

But Fakreddin was not dismayed. Marching out of Mansourah, he encamped at Djédilé, on the shore of the canal of Achmoum, with the Nile on his left and the city in his rear. Here the Emir awaited the foe. "Be brave: we will yet avenge the glory of Islamism," he said, addressing his troops; "and on Sebastian's day I will dine in the red tent of the French King."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MARCH TO MANSOURAH.

WHILE Melikul-Salih, Sultan of Egypt, was exerting his last energy to save the empire of the Ayoubites from the Franks, arrival after arrival swelled the army that lay encamped around the oriflamme on the plains of Damietta. Thither, recovered from their fright, gathered the crusaders whose ships the storm had driven on the Syrian coast; thither came the Count of Poitiers, with the *arrière ban* of the French army; and thither, under their grand masters, to take part in the holy enterprise, hurried the Templars and Hospitallers, whose discipline and knowledge of Eastern warfare rendered their presence of the utmost importance. With such allies, and an army of sixty thousand men, twenty thousand of whom were cavalry, the Saint-king might well flatter himself with the hope of accomplishing something great.

When affairs reached this stage, Louis resolved on leaving Damietta; and a council of princes and peers was held to deliberate on the measures most likely to complete the conquest of Egypt. The more prudent

recommended the King to attack Alexandria; but several, who were young and fiery, insisted on proceeding to Cairo. Foremost among those eager to march to the Egyptian capital, was the Count of Artois. "If," said he, "you wish to kill a serpent, you ought to begin by crushing its head."

After a warm discussion, Louis declared in favour of the bolder project; and orders were given for marching to Cairo. Leaving Queen Margaret, with the Countesses of Artois and Poitiers, at Damietta, under the protection of a strong garrison, the crusaders moved, in feudal array, along the banks of the Nile; while a fleet, with provisions and engines of war, ascended the river.

For a time the armed pilgrims marched on without any foe worthy of their steel appearing. Five hundred horsemen, however, hung about, and caused some surprise by stating that they had come to aid the crusaders in their progress. Seeing that they seemed pacific, and that their number was too small to inspire dread, the King commanded his soldiers not to molest them. But it soon appeared that they were not bent on so amicable a mission as they pretended. No sooner, indeed, was a favourable opportunity presented, than they fell on the Templars, and one knight of the order, struck with a battle-axe, ere he was aware of his danger, fell dead from his horse.

"Down with the Pagan dogs!" cried twenty voices,

as the body of the knight rolled at the feet of the marshal of the order.

“Yes, companions,” shouted the marshal, “attack them in the name of God ; for I cannot suffer thus.”

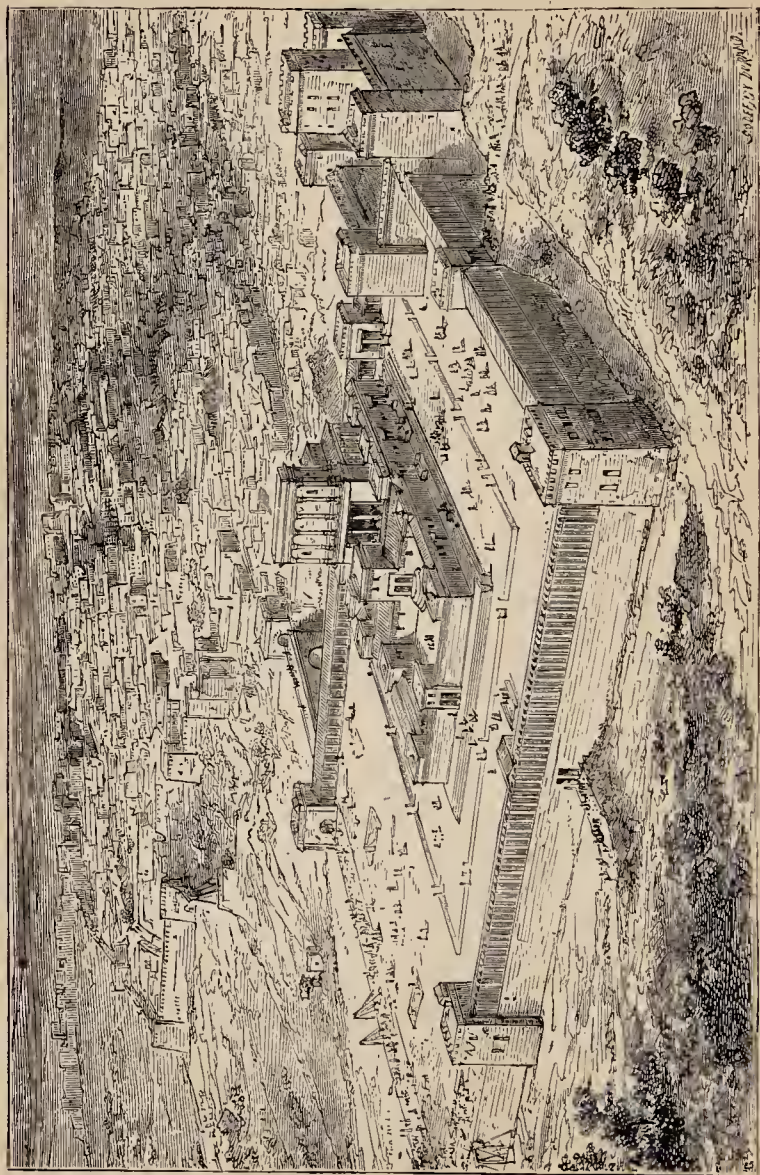
As the marshal spoke, the Templars put their horses in motion, and charged the Saracens. At the same time a cry to arms rung through the crusaders’ ranks ; and hundreds, spurring forward, surrounded the Moslem warriors on all sides. No chance of escape remained for them ; and such as did not fall by the weapons of their foes, perished in the waters of the Nile.

After this adventure, the crusaders continued their march, and soon approached the town of Mansourah. At this point, however, their progress was interrupted by two obstacles. One was the canal known as the Achmoum, with a deep bed and steep banks ; the other was the Saracen army, which, under Fakreddin, appeared encamped on the opposite bank.

“Sire,” said a knight to the King, “I have learned that the Emir boasts of his intention to dine in your tent on Sebastian’s day.”

“Does he ?” said Louis on hearing this. “However, I will take good care to prevent him.”

The obstacle presented by the canal of Achmoum appeared insuperable, for the time being, to the crusaders. Indeed, they were so impressed with the depth of its bed and the steepness of its banks, that they neglected to ascertain whether there was no



THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM IN THE TIME OF CHRIST.

Crusades and Crusaders.

ford by which it could be crossed. Instead of looking for a ford, they commenced the construction of a causeway; and this led to serious consequences. The Saracens, in fact, at once perceived their advantage; and while many men, protected by machines and wooden castles, were occupied with the work, the Saracens exercised their utmost ingenuity to retard their progress. It soon appeared that Fakred-din, though he had retreated from Damietta, was by no means inclined to acknowledge the superiority of the Franks without a struggle. Every day brought fresh annoyances, and every night new troubles. After the Saracens had once ventured to attack the camp, and found the Franks not quite invincible, their audacity became greater; and in the conflicts that took place day by day, the crusaders had not always the advantage.

Notwithstanding their gallant bravery, the French knights found that they were encountering no contemptible foes. Every day the Saracens showed a fiercer determination to prevent the completion of the causeway; and they exerted themselves, to the utmost of their power, to produce consternation among the crusaders by discharging Greek fire. The horrors endured during one night have been described by Joinville. On that occasion the Saracens brought a terrible engine, and placed it opposite the machines guarded by the lordly chronicler and a knight named Sir Walter Curel. The engine

vomited forth huge bodies of flame, which drew after it a tail, that looked, in the darkness, like a fiery serpent. Nothing could have exceeded the surprise and horror of the crusaders at this mode of attack. Every man gave way to bewilderment, and called on his neighbours for aid; but in the midst of the consternation around him, Sir Walter Curel retained his presence of mind. "Gentlemen," cried the brave knight, "we appear to be lost; for if they set fire to our chas-chateils, we shall be burned; and, if we quit our posts, we are dishonoured. God alone can save us from this peril. Wherefore I advise every one, whenever this fire is thrown, to cast himself on his knees and call upon the name of the Lord."

The advice of Sir Walter appeared much too good to be neglected; and his wisdom was generally acknowledged. Seven times during the night, the engine sent forth its shower of fire; and, each time, the crusaders threw themselves on their knees, the King setting the example by prostrating himself on the ground, and crying aloud, "Good Lord, preserve me and my people!"

Hours passed over, without the Greek fire doing serious mischief; but, at length, one of the bodies of flame fell beside the chas-chateil guarded by Lord de Courtenay, struck a bank in front of his position, and ran along the ground towards his men. This circumstance created a fearful panic. "Help, my

lord, we are burnt," cried one of Courtenay's knights, rushing towards Joinville; "there is a long train of fire running straight for our castle." Joinville instantly hastened to render assistance; and the fire was extinguished. But this operation was not performed without danger; for, from the opposite bank, arrows and darts coming in showers, rattled against steel cap and chain mail.

While such scenes were enacted, Fakreddin was not idle. From the first, he had lost no opportunity of ascertaining the position and prospects of the crusaders. As intelligence on such subjects could only be obtained from captives, the Emir offered a handsome reward for every Frank brought to his tent; and this led a Saracen soldier to perform an exploit so extraordinary as to have been carefully recorded by Arabian chroniclers, who omitted far more important events.

It appears that the Saracen soldier determined to take a Christian prisoner to the Emir's tent, and fell upon a most whimsical plan for accomplishing his purpose. Having scooped out a melon, and thrust his head into the cavity, he threw himself into the stream, and swam down in such a way that the melon seemed to float on the water. The trick proved successful; for one of the crusaders, yielding to temptation, and eager to gratify his appetite, rushed into the canal and grasped at the melon. Scarcely, however, had the Frank stretched out his

hand, when he found himself seized by the Saracen, and dragged forcibly away to the Emir's tent.

Meanwhile, the crusaders had been more than a month engaged in the attempt to construct a causeway, and were quite as far from accomplishing their object as during the first week. Suddenly they became aware that the passage of the Achmoum might be effected by means much simpler. One day a Bedouin presented himself to the Constable of France, and engaged, for five hundred golden bezants, to point out a ford by which the crusaders might safely reach the opposite bank. The Constable immediately made inquiries, and, having ascertained that the Bedouin was not deceiving him, paid the sum demanded. One night in the month of February, the crusaders, having left the Duke of Burgundy to guard their camp, marched along the bank of the canal, and awaited the break of day to plunge through the water, and advance on Mansourah.

CHAPTER IX.

BIBARS BENDOCDAR.

AT the time when the march of the French army towards Mansourah startled the inhabitants of that city out of their propriety, and caused dismay within the walls of Cairo, there was one Moslem warrior who did not share in the general alarm. Far from shrinking from the peril, this individual recognised with satisfaction the danger and disorder, from the bosom of which a daring leader might raise himself to power by rekindling courage and restoring discipline. He was chief of the Mamelukes, known as Bibars Bendocdar, and destined to associate his name with great crimes and memorable exploits.

At that time, it was the custom of the East, when two kings went to war, to sell the subjects of the vanquished prince as slaves. Bought by merchants, these slaves were conveyed by sea to Egypt; and their children, purchased by the Sultan, were trained from boyhood in his service. Whenever their beards began to grow, they were taught to wield the sword and to draw the bow; and in due

time enrolled in that famous military body which Saladin had instituted.

Bibars Bendocdar had originally been brought to Egypt as a slave, and admitted into the Mameluke force. His ambition being intense, and his talent quite equal to his ambition, he rose rapidly. Indeed, he was one of those men who deem themselves born to rule, and who, even when slaves, dream of the day that is to dawn on them as tyrants. He was quite determined to find a way to power; and, as to the means, he was in no respect scrupulous.

Ere long, Bibars Bendocdar found that circumstances favoured his aspirations. No position was more likely to lead from obscurity to fame, than that which he occupied. The Mamelukes were always in favour with the Sultan; they wore his emblazonments of pure gold, only adding bars of vermillion, with birds, or roses, or griffins, for difference; they watched over his safety during peace, and, in time of war, they acted as his body-guard. No subjects had such favourable opportunities of cultivating his favour.

It happened that on one occasion, when Melikul-Salih was besieging a town, and his army fled before the foe, the Baharite slaves maintained their position, and allowed him time to escape. Elevated to the Egyptian throne, Melikul-Salih, remembering this valuable service, gave them his whole confidence, formed them into a troop known as the Mamelukes-

Baharites, loaded them with gifts, and raised them to the highest dignities. At the time when Louis landed at Damietta, this force was composed of eight hundred men ; and of these none stood higher in the Sultan's favour than Bibars Bendocdar.

But it was not merely the confidence of the Sultan that Bibars Bendocdar enjoyed. Having occupied himself with military affairs, he had learned the arts by which warriors of adventurous spirit elevate themselves to supremacy. Besides, he had other qualities, that rendered him a dangerous foe—sagacity, penetration, cruelty, incredible activity, skill in war, courage in conflict, devotion to the cause for which he had so often fought.

For the rest, Bibars Bendocdar professed great faith in Mahomet's religion, and had great faith, also, in his own genius and destiny. Perhaps, now and then, his imagination, with prophetic instinct, conjured up the vision of a tall warrior with light hair mounted on a gray steed and crossing his path like a shadow. But if so, he would also feel that the danger was distant. The gray steed had not yet been foaled ; and the tall rider was still a boy of twelve, playing at ball with his little brother in the court-yard at Westminster, or spurring his pony, in mimic tilt, against the wooden likeness of a Saracen on the green sward at Eltham.

CHAPTER X.

THE BATTLE OF MANSOURAH.

At daybreak, on the morning of Tuesday, the 8th of February, 1249, the crusaders, assembled on the bank of the Achmoum, awaited a signal from the King of France, to attempt a passage. It was at this moment, so important to Louis, to France, and to the Christians in the East, that the Saint-king's brother was guilty of a piece of presumption, that was destined to lead to the ruin of the Christian army.

At all times, it would seem, the Count of Artois was an unreasonable being; and, on this occasion, nothing could satisfy the regal warrior, but the privilege of being the first to cross. Aware of the danger of indiscretion at such a moment, Louis attempted to restrain his brother's impetuosity; but the Count, promising patiently to await the main army, placed himself at the head of the van, which was composed of Templars, Hospitallers, and English crusaders; and dashing through the canal, dispersed some hundred horsemen, who appeared to oppose

his progress, pursued them, in spite of remonstrances from the Grand Masters of the Temple and the Hospital, towards Djédilé, and, entering the camp, created a panic among the Saracene warriors.

When the camp of Djédilé was thus invaded, Fakreddin was in his bath, and having his beard coloured. Surprised while in this situation with the tumult, and with intelligence that the Franks were upon him, the Emir rushed out scantily clad, and sprang on horseback to rally his men. Inspired by his example, the Saracens made a brief attempt at resistance. Finding their efforts vain, however, they left their chief to his fate; and rushed in a body towards Mansourah. Disdaining to fly or yield, fighting bravely, and covered with wounds, Fakreddin fell in the midst of his foes; and the Saracens, regarding him as a martyr for Islamism, said that the Franks had sent him to the banks of the celestial river, and that his end was glorious.

The crusaders, under the King, had not succeeded in crossing the canal of Aehmoum, when the Count of Artois, the two Grand Masters, and the Earl of Salisbury, stood victors in the camp at Djédilé. But, elate with success, and forgetting that discretion is the better part of valour, the Count proposed an immediate attack on the town of Mansourah.

“Gentlemen,” said the French Prince, “let us set upon the foe, while affairs prosper in our hands, and they are in dismay. Speed will now be of more

avail than strength ; and the fewer we are, the greater will be our gain. Forward, then, and crush the Saracens at a blow."

"Hurrah, upon them ! Upon them !" shouted an old deaf knight, who held the Count's rein. "Forward ! Forward !"

"Noble Count," said the Master of the Templars, "we give all praise to your bravery ; but be advised. Our men are weary ; our horses are wounded ; and we must not overvalue our victory, or suppose our enemies are conquered, because they have lost a handful of soldiers. Let us, therefore, return to the King, that we may be strengthened by his counsel and aid. We are in a strange country ; and our best instructors are behind. Let us stay for our lantern, and not go forward in the dark."

"Ah ! sir Knight," exclaimed the Count, swelling with anger and pride ; "you are at the old game. But for the treachery of the Templars, and the sedition of the Hospitallers, and others calling themselves religious men, the Holy Land would long since have been gained."

"Why, noble Count," said the Grand Master, "should we take the habit of religion ? Is it, think you, to overthrow the church, and betray the cause of Christ, that we abandon our homes and kindred, and pass our days in a foreign land, amid perils and fatigue ? However, standard-bearer, unfurl the banner of the Temple, and let us forward, in God's name,

to try all together the fortunes of battle and the chances of death!"

"My Lord," said the Earl of Salisbury, addressing the Count of Artois, "I pray you to listen to the wholesome counsel of the Grand Master. He has long been in this country, and has learned, by experience, the cunning as well as the strength of our foes. We being strangers are ignorant of our perils; but we know, that as far as the East is from the West, so far are we different from the Orientals."

"What cowardice there is in these English!" exclaimed the Count, in a tone so loud as to be heard by hundreds. "But their timid counsel suits not us. Happy, indeed, should I deem our army, if purged from these English tails."

"Sir Robert de Vere, raise my standard," exclaimed Salisbury, mounting his Flemish charger, and striving to be calm, though the Plantagenet blood boiled in his veins; "and you, Count of Artois, lead on, and see if we are dismayed by the peril of death. The touchstone must tell what is gold and what is brass; and, by good St. George I swear, as I put on my helmet, that we 'English tails' will this day be where you will not dare come nigh the tails of our horses."

The dispute having thus come to an end, the Count of Artois and his comrades put on their head-pieces and mounted their steeds; and French, Templars, Hospitallers, and English, dashed towards

Mansourah. Meeting at first with no opposition, they penetrated into the city; while the inhabitants fled in terror along the road to Cairo. But, at that moment, the keen eye of Bibars Bendoedar perceived the imprudence of which the crusaders had been guilty; and rallying the flying Saracens, the Mameluke chief led them down upon the conquerors of Fakreddin. Few as the crusaders were, in comparison with the swarming foe, they fought gallantly and well; fighting as became knights and soldiers of the cross. But, against the host under Bibars Bendoedar, their courage proved vain; and now, seeing the folly of which he had been the author, the Count of Artois thought of retreat.

“Earl William,” cried the French Prince, riding up to Salisbury, “God fights against us—we can no longer resist. Let us consult our safety by flight, and escape while our horses can carry us.”

“Fly!” exclaimed the English Earl scornfully; “God forbid, Count, that my father’s son should fly from the face of a Saracen.”

By this time, the plight of the Christians was desperate; but, though wounded and exhausted, they maintained the struggle for hours. Nearly fifteen hundred knights fell in the conflict; nearly three hundred of whom were of the order of the Temple.

But no man bore himself more bravely than the Earl of Salisbury. Resolved to sell his life at the

dearest rate, he faced the Saracens with desperate valour, dealing death all around him. At length his horse's feet were cut off; and the steed bore his rider to the ground. Even then, Salisbury, raising himself from the ground, fought with disdain and fell with dignity.* Robert de Vere, seeing the Earl fall, folded the English standard round his body and lay down exhausted to die by his leader's side. The Count of Artois had disappeared; but it is somewhat uncertain whether he fell in the carnage, or was drowned while attempting to save himself by flight. The most probable account, however, is that, finding the struggle vain, he turned his horse's head, spurred off, with a vague hope of regaining the main army, and sank with his steed, never more to rise, while attempting to swim one of the branches of the Nile.

Of the many hundred knights, who, at daybreak on Shrove Tuesday, crossed the canal of Achmoum, two only escaped the carnage at Mansourah. One was the Master of the Temple, the other the Master of the

* "When the account of this misfortune reached the ears of the Abbess and Countess Hela," says Matthew Paris "she, with a cheerful spirit, clasped hands, and on bended knees, broke forth in praise of God, highly pleasing to Christ, in these words: —'Lord Jesus Christ, I give thee thanks for having willed it, that I, a sinner, should be the mother of a son whom you have deigned to honour with the crown of martyrdom. I hope, by his intercession, I shall soon be advanced to the glories of the heavenly kingdom.'"

Hospital. Perceiving that all his knights were slain, and that the day was lost, the Templar made for the camp of the Christians. Finding himself left alone on the field, and despairing of escape, the Hospitaller yielded himself prisoner to the Saracens. It was ten o'clock in the morning when the conflict commenced; it was three in the afternoon ere all was over.

Meanwhile, the main body of the French army had, under the King's auspices, with great difficulty crossed the canal of Aehmoum. Ere the passage had been effected, however, intelligence reached the King that the Count of Artois was hard pressed by the Saracens. Without delay, the Count of Brittany and a multitude of knights rushed to the rescue, fighting as they went; for the distance they had to travel was two leagues, and the plain between the canal and Mansourah was covered with Saracens.

At length, the sound of trumpets and clarions announced that the French had crossed the canal; and Louis, halting on an eminence, surveyed the scene. "I saw the King arrive," says Joinville, "with all his attendants, and with a terrible noise of trumpets clarions, and horns. He halted on an eminence, with his men-at-arms, for something he had to say; and I assure you, that I never saw so handsome a man under arms. He was taller than any of his troops by the shoulders; and his helmet, which was gilded, was handsomely placed on his head; and he bore a German sword in his hand." While the

King was still hesitating what to do, the Constable of France spurred forward, and informed him of the peril in which the Count of Artois was placed.

“Sire,” said the Constable, “your noble brother is surrounded at Mansourah. He holds out gallantly; but is much in need of aid.”

“Constable,” said Louis, “spur forward to his rescue, and I will follow thee.”

The King and his knights now galloped towards Mansourah; but ere they reached the town, the aspect of affairs became much more threatening. In fact, Bibars Bendocdar, having defeated the Count of Artois, came with a mighty force to encounter Louis; and ere the crusaders comprehended what was occurring, they were separated from each other, and found themselves face to face with countless foes. A strange tumultuous fight then took place; and the plain shook with a thousand combats. “Montjoie, St. Denis!” the war-cry of the French, was answered by the Saracens with shouts of “Islam! Islam!” and all was carnage and confusion from Mansourah to the Achmoum.

Notwithstanding the disadvantage at which they were, the French warriors fought with gallant bravery, and wrought many memorable exploits. Joinville, with six other knights, had the perilous duty of defending a small bridge against a host of Saracens; and maintained his post with characteristic courage. Observing the Count of Soissons, who was his kins-

man, approach, the Seneschal hastened to secure his aid.

“Sir Count,” he cried, “should this bridge be lost, the King will at the same time have his enemies both in front and rear. Wherefore, I beg you to remain and guard it.”

“Willingly, Seneschal,” answered the Count, as he placed himself on Joinville’s right hand.

While the defenders of the bridge were sitting on horseback prepared to keep it against all comers, a Saracen, galloping suddenly up, felled one of the knights with a battle-axe, and crossed to his own people, thinking Joinville would follow. But the Seneschal perceived the stratagem, and would not be decoyed from his post. After having been fearfully annoyed, however, by a crowd of half-armed Saracens, Joinville and his friends made a charge. The Saracens fled from the place; but turned when at a safe distance, and shouted out a defiance. “Seneschal,” said the Count of Soissons gaily, as the knights resumed their post, “let the rascal rabble bawl and bray as they please, by the Cresse Dieu, you and I will live to talk of this day’s exploits in the chambers of our ladies!”

While the Count of Soissons indulged his gay humour in the midst of peril and perplexity, a knight, mounted on a short, but strong horse, came galloping towards them, from Mansourah. His plight was unenviable; for his face was wounded; blood was rush-

ing from his mouth ; and the reins of his bridle were cut, so that he was under the necessity of supporting himself by his horse's neck. The wounded knight was the Count of Brittany ; and he was closely pursued by Saracens. " Yet," remarks Joinville, " he does not seem to be afraid of them ; for he frequently turns round and gives them abusive words by way of mockery."

Meantime, all over the plain, the battle was going on ; and the King, becoming alarmed, ordered that the French should draw near the canal. The oriflamme had already indicated the direction to be taken, when messengers arrived from one side to announce that the Count of Artois was in danger of perishing, and from the other to say that the Count of Poitiers must succumb unless rescued ; and while the King, perplexed by these messages, remained in thought, some of his knights spurred off in one direction and some in another, till the utmost confusion prevailed

When matters reached this stage, Louis made every effort to restore order, but in vain. His voice was scarcely heard amid the din of battle. Anxious and apprehensive, he endeavoured to save his army ; and, fearless of personal danger, he soon found himself in the thick of the fight and environed by foes. He seemed, indeed, to have sealed his fate ; and six Saracens, rushing forward at once, attempted to seize his bridle, and take him prisoner. At this

point, however, Louis, who with all his saintly theories was a warrior of mettle, exerted all his strength, and beat off his assailants with an energy that Godfrey or Richard might have envied, till the French knights, observing their King's danger and animated by his courage, spurred to the rescue, and robbed the Saracens of their prey.

Night, at length, put an end to the conflict; the Grand Master of the Templars, with his vestments torn to rags, his cuirass pierced, and his face wounded, reached the army of crusaders, and described the scene in which he had enacted a part. When, therefore, Bibars Bendoedar retired to Mansourah, and Louis, retreating to Djédilé, took possession of the Saracens' camp and their engines of war, the Prior of the hospital of Ronnay, wishing to break the news gently, presented himself, and kissed the King's gauntleted hand.

"Have you any tidings, Sire," asked the Prior, "of your noble brother, the Count of Artois?"

"Yes," answered Louis sorrowfully; "I know all."

"Sire," said the Prior, thinking to convey comfort, "no King of France has ever reaped such honour as you have done. You have crossed a dangerous river to combat your enemies; you have gained the day; you have put them to flight; and now you conclude the business by taking possession of the camp which they occupied."

“God be praised for all the good He has granted me,” said Louis.

The voice of the saintly King faltered as he spoke ; and tears, rolling down his cheeks, expressed more touchingly than words could have done the melancholy feelings at his heart. The Prior of Ronnay might, indeed, talk cheeringly of Mansourah, and use fine words to make it seem a victory ; but Louis was in no mood to be deluded by phrases. Reflecting on the losses sustained that day by the soldiers of the cross, he could not help feeling that such a victory was almost worse than a defeat ; and it was doubtless with sadness and sorrow, that the royal warrior that night laid his head upon a pillow, and commended his soul to God.

CHAPTER XI.

DISASTERS AND CALAMITIES.

WHILE the French were encamped at Djédilé, and their King was mourning the fate of his kinsman and countrymen, the Saracens evinced the utmost satisfaction with the results of Shrove Tuesday, and proceeded to celebrate the battle of Mansourah as a victory.

It appears that when, on the morning of that eventful day, the van of the crusaders crossed the Achmoum, and seized the camp of the Emir Fakreddin, news of the disaster was carried by a pigeon to the Egyptian capital. Cairo was instantly in consternation. The inhabitants believed the days of Islamism to be numbered, and were eager to escape; but they seemed to think the world was coming to an end, and hardly knew where to go. Many, however, prepared to depart to Upper Egypt; and the gates of the city were left open to admit further intelligence without delay. All night sorrow reigned in the city: but in the morning a second pigeon brought tidings of the defeat of the Count of Artois, and Cairo

became the scene of joy. Everything like fear vanished; and everybody rejoiced that the God of Mahomet had declared against the Christians.

Meanwhile, Bibars Bendocdar lost no time in pursuing his triumph. On the night of Shrove Tuesday, the Saracens made several attempts to recapture their machines of war; and the crusaders, though wounded and fatigued, were repeatedly under the necessity of rousing themselves to energy, and defending their position at the point of the sword. Alarm after alarm was given; and, though the Christian warriors kept the enemy at bay, they felt the peril to which they were exposed; passed hours in preparing for defence; and erected a bridge over the Achmoum, in order to form a junction with the Duke of Burgundy's camp.

While the crusaders were thus employed, Bibars Bendocdar did everything likely to inflame the ardour of his soldiers. A cuirass, covered with fleur-de-lis, and declared to be that of the French King, was publicly exhibited; the heads of several knights were carried about in triumph, as ghastly trophies of the slaughter at Mansourah; heralds loudly proclaimed that the Christian army was a trunk without life; and the soldiers clamoured to be led against the foe.

Bibars Bendocdar was in no mood to baffle a desire so universally expressed; and, on the first Friday in Lent, he formed his men in battle order. But Louis

had been warned that an attack was meditated ; and when the Mameluke chief marched into the plain, he found his foes under arms, and prepared to resist with the zeal of crusaders and the courage of gentlemen.

Bibars Bendocdar was not dismayed by the prospect of a stern conflict. The formidable front presented by the crusaders greatly increased the Mameluke's importance in his soldiers' eyes, and brought him nearer to the object of ambition on which he had set his heart. Placing his cavalry in the van, ranging his infantry behind, and his reserve in the rear, the bold warrior extended his lines till his host covered the plain.

Having set his men in battle array, and ordered the charge to be sounded, Bibars Bendocdar advanced upon the foe ; and the Saracene infantry commenced the conflict by attacking the French under the Count of Anjou. This division, composed of cavalry, was quickly overwhelmed with Greek fire. Surcoats and caparisons were soon in a blaze ; and the horses, breaking from their riders, plunged and galloped hither and thither. Availing themselves of the confusion, the Saracene cavalry penetrated within the entrenchments, and the Count was surrounded by countless foes.

When news of the Count's peril was carried to Louis, the King exhibited a courage worthy of his fame. Shouting his battle-cry, Louis immediately

spurred to the rescue; and, undismayed by the arrows or by the Greek fire that fell on the caparisons of his horse, he charged, at the head of his knights, right upon the foe, and rescued his brother from a perilous predicament.

But while Louis thus saved the Count of Anjou from destruction, the Count of Poitiers was exposed to equal danger. At the opening of the battle, the Count's division, composed of infantry, gave way before the charge of the Saracen horse; and the Count had the mortification of seeing his men scattered, and finding himself seized as a prisoner. Luckily, however, for the Count, he was a favourite with the people; and no sooner did the workmen, and sutlers, and camp-followers see him seized, than they rushed impetuously forward and effected his rescue.

Meanwhile, the courage of Louis had wrought wonders. Inspired by the example of the French King, the warriors of the cross resisted with dauntless valour. Fortune still denied Bibars Bendocdar a decisive victory; and against the crusaders the energy of the Mameluke chief, and the enthusiasm of his followers, were exerted in vain. Every minute the resistance became more stubborn. At one point, the crusaders from Cyprus and Syria valiantly resisted the foe; at another point, those of Champagne and Flanders bore up against great odds; at a third, the Templars, though sadly reduced in number by

Tuesday's carnage, and depressed by the death of their Grand Master, who had fallen early in the day with several of his knights, exhibited the fine spectacle of a handful of men baffling a host.

Finding that he was wasting his strength in a vain attempt, Bibars Bendocdar drew off his men. But he had his consolation in leaving the enemy in a condition so perilous, that neither Louis nor his friends knew on what side to turn. The crusaders, in fact, could no longer cherish the idea of advancing to Cairo. A retreat to Damietta was still more than their pride could brook. In their despair, they determined to remain at Djédilé.

The calamities of the crusaders now began in earnest. After the two battles, they had neglected to bury the slain ; and the bodies, cast into the Achmoum, and raised to the surface of the water, soon caused a pestilence in the camp. The abstinence during Lent added to the horrors of the disease ; numbers perished daily ; and, ere long, nothing was heard but prayers for the dead and dying.

At length Louis was added to the list of sick ; and while all around was death and despair, news suddenly ceased to arrive from Damietta. This circumstance caused the most gloomy forebodings ; but a vessel belonging to the Count of Flanders at length reached the camp, and brought tidings that the Saracens, in order to add the evil of famine to that of pestilence, had resolved to interrupt communication ;

that, with such a view, they had transported a number of galleys overland, and formed an ambuscade; that many French vessels had been taken unawares; and that the Mussulman flag was displayed all along the Nile. The consequence of this soon appeared in the shape of famine: and the crusaders, deeming a truce their sole chance, despatched Philip de Montfort as ambassador.

While the crusaders were suffering, the Saracens, aware of the power of such auxiliaries as pestilence and famine, remained motionless in their camp. Nevertheless, they expressed their readiness to treat with Montfort, and nominated commissioners for that purpose. Everything went smoothly, and the Saracens appeared ready to agree to anything reasonable. But when the question of hostages came to be discussed, and the French offered the Counts of Anjou and Poitiers, the Saracens insisted on retaining the King of France. This proposal terminated the negotiations; and the crusaders, crossing the Achmoum by the bridge they had erected, appointed a day for marching back to Damietta.

On the arrival of the appointed day, the sick, the wounded, the women, and the children were embarked on the Nile; and, at the same time, the papal legate, with several French nobles, got on board a vessel. The King was urged to follow their example; but he would not abandon his army. The soldiers, however, endeavoured to secure his safety, and ran

along the bank shouting to the boatmen not to go till the King embarked.

“Wait for the King! Wait for the King!” was their cry.

“No!” said Louis, touched but resolute. “Go on. I will share weal or woe with my soldiers. I am not such a niggard of life as not to spend it in such good company and in so good a cause.”

The boats now began to descend the Nile; but they were not destined to reach Damietta. Attacked by the Saracens, every vessel, save that of the legate, was destroyed, and those on board were sacrificed without mercy. More than thirty thousand crusaders lost their lives. A few men of rank, deemed likely to pay ransom, were spared: and among these was the Sieur de Joinville, whom the Saracens believed to be the King’s cousin.

While the boats went down the Nile, the Duke of Burgundy broke up his camp; and at nightfall the crusaders commenced their march towards Damietta. The King brought up the rear; but he was in no condition to occupy the post of honour. He wore neither cuirass nor helmet; he had no weapon but his sword; and he had scarcely sufficient strength to support himself on his steed. Circumstances soon rendered his position perilous. The French had neglected to break down the bridge across the Aehmoum; and no sooner did the King move towards Damietta, than the Saracens, using it to cross the canal, covered the

plain on the Damietta side, and charged the crusaders at every turn. The scene that ensued was fearful. Unable, in the darkness, to see their foes, the crusaders were exposed to countless disasters; and at length, on reaching the little town of Minieh, they drew up on a hill, with the desperate determination of fighting to the death.

Louis was now utterly exhausted. Weak as a child, the saintly King was lifted from his horse and carried into the town; and all around was consternation and despair, when Philip de Montfort came and proposed to renew negotiations.

"Sire," said the Knight, "I have just seen the Emir, with whom I treated for a suspension of hostilities: and, if it is your good pleasure, I will see him again on the subject."

"Go," said Louis, "and promise to submit to the conditions first required by the Sultan."

Montfort accordingly went; and the Saracens, still feeling some dread of their foes, agreed to treat. Montfort had already given the Emir a ring from his finger, and their hands had met, when a traitor rushed in and interrupted the conference.

"Seigneurs—noble knights of France," he exclaimed, "surrender yourselves all! The King commands you by me. Do not cause him to be killed."

"It is not customary to treat with vanquished foes," said the Emir on hearing the message; and he forthwith terminated the negotiation.

All was now over; and the crusaders, feeling that such was the case, ceased to resist their fate. In truth, the Saracens gave them no time to reflect or rally: for one of the emirs, entering Minieh, seized the King, his brothers, and his knights, placed chains on their hands and feet, and conducted them in triumph to a boat of war. No generosity was shown towards the vanquished. The oriflamme was paraded with scorn; crosses and images were trampled under foot; and, with trumpets sounding and kettle-drums clashing, the captive crusaders were marched into Mansourah.

While the barons and knights of France were huddled together into an enclosure, and daily decimated by an executioner, the King was confined to the house of a minister of the Sultan, and placed under guard of a eunuch. After some days, Louis was offered liberty on condition of surrendering Damietta and the cities of Palestine still possessed by Christians; but he calmly refused to treat on such terms, and listened with passive defiance to threats of perpetual imprisonment. At length his jailors menaced him with violence, and pointed significantly to a frightful instrument of torture known as the "Bernicles." "I am your captive," said Louis with serene dignity, "and you can do with me as you please"

CHAPTER XII.

THE QUEEN AT DAMIETTA.

WHILE Louis, in captivity and chains, was exhibiting the dignity of a gentleman and the resignation of a Christian, Margaret of Provence was proving herself not unworthy of such a husband.

At first, the rumours of the calamities of the crusaders which reached Damietta were vague and uncertain; but ere long intelligence that the whole army had been destroyed, produced general consternation. Some degree of selfishness was, of course, displayed. The Pisans and Genoese immediately bethought them of securing their own safety; the ladies of the crusaders bewailed the fate of their lords and their own extreme peril; and the Queen, who was on the point of becoming a mother, was afflicted to such a degree, that a knight, who had seen more than eighty summers, but whose heart still overflowed with chivalry, was under the necessity of guarding her chamber by day and by night. At one time, her imagination conjured up a fearful scene, in which a body of Saracens appeared butchering her husband; at another, she

believed that the Saracens had entered her chamber, and were about to kill her; and scarcely had she sunk exhausted and closed her eyes in sleep, when she was startled by some fearful dream, and sprang up in terror and dismay.

"Help, help!" shouted the afflicted Queen, "they are upon us."

"Madam," said the aged Knight, "do not be alarmed. I am with you. Dismiss your fears."

"Sir Knight," exclaimed the unhappy woman, throwing herself on her knees, "promise that you will grant me the favour I am about to ask."

"I give you my oath, madam," answered the old warrior, "that I will comply with your wishes."

"Then, sir Knight," said the Queen, "I request, by the faith you have pledged, that if the Saracens should take the city, you will cut off my head rather than allow me to fall into their hands."

"Madam," said the old Knight, "I have already thought of doing so, in case the worst should befall."

Margaret after this scene was more composed; and, on the third day after receiving the sad intelligence, she gave birth to her son John. Hardly, however, had she wept over this "child of misery," when she was informed that the Pisans and Genoese, in their discontent, were about to abandon Damietta and return to their homes. On receiving this alarming intelligence, Margaret ordered the chief male-

contents to be brought to her chamber, and addressed them from her couch.

“Gentlemen,” said the Queen raising her head, “for the love of God, do not leave this city; for you know well if you do, that you will utterly ruin the King and his army. Be moved by my tears, and have compassion on the poor child whom you see lying by my side.”

“Madam,” said the Pisans and Genoese, utterly unmoved by the tears and supplications of the distressed Queen, “we have no provisions left; and we cannot stay longer at the risk of dying of hunger.”

“Fear not,” said the Queen. “You shall not die of hunger. I will cause all the provisions in the place to be bought, and distributed henceforth in the name of the King.”

On receiving this assurance, the Pisans and Genoese consented to remain; and Margaret, at the cost of three hundred and sixty thousand livres, provided for their subsistence. But the men whom the Queen thus retained as a garrison, were not likely to make any formidable resistance in the event of a siege; and doubtless it was not without dismay that Margaret heard of a Saracenic host’s approach.

It appears that while Margaret was providing for the defence of Damietta, with a spirit which almost entitles her to a place in history beside such heroines as the Countesses of Salisbury, Dunbar, and Derby,

the Saracens, finding that Louis would not consent to surrender the city, conceived the idea of taking it by force. "Why do we hesitate?" they asked, "when we can obtain Damietta whether this petty prince is willing or unwilling?"

An attack on Damietta was soon decided on; and the Saracens, having mustered a numerous army, and arrayed themselves in the armour of the crusaders, marched towards the city. Displaying the banners of the captive pilgrims, the Eastern warriors approached the walls, hoping to pass themselves as French, and thus, by obtaining access without opposition, to secure an easy victory. But on this point they found themselves mistaken. At first, indeed, the defenders of Damietta were deceived; but, on closer inspection, they suspected a stratagem, and rushed to guard the gates and approaches.

The Saracens, mortified with this reception, imperiously demanded admission, and told the French that their King and all his knights had perished. But the Christians in Damietta, shouting out a loud defiance, guarded every approach with vigilance, and repulsed every attempt with alacrity. "Whatever may have happened," said they, "we are prepared to stand a siege; and we will withstand all assaults of the Saracens till the warriors we expect from the West come to our relief."

Finding their foes so determined, and probably unaware of the weakness of the garrison, the Saracens

beat a retreat, and returned to Mansourah, with tidings that, in spite of all calamities, the crusaders were too formidable to be despised. The Christians at Damietta then breathed more freely. But the prospect before Queen Margaret and those who shared her peril was not agreeable. They could no longer doubt that the destruction of the French army had been accomplished, since they had seen the armour and ensigns, and painted devices, of the crusaders in possession of the enemy; and the hope of aid from Europe was indeed slender. Besides, their strength was rapidly failing, and even the Queen's high spirit could hardly have animated them to renewed exertions. But, while the defenders of Damietta were looking to the future with apprehension, events occurred which startled both Asia and Europe, shook the empire of the Sultan to its foundation, and opened the prison doors of the saintly King and his faithful knights.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LAST OF THE AYOUBITES.

WHILE the crusaders were still encamped on both sides of the Achmoum, and Bibars Bendoedar was rejoicing with his Mamelukes over their victory at Mansourah, Touran-Chah, son and heir of Melikul-Salih, arrived to ascend the throne of Egypt. Unfortunately for his popularity, the new Sultan did not come alone. With him, from Mesopotamia, arrived bands of favourites, who immediately displaced the ministers of his father, and excited the jealousy of the Mamelukes. Complaints and reproaches were soon heard. "You have bestowed the spoils of the vanquished Franks," said the Mameluke chiefs to the Sultan, "not on those who have borne the burden of the war, but on men whose sole merit consists of having come from the banks of the Euphrates to the Nile."

The Sultan's favourites soon became aware of the jealousy felt towards them. Indeed, the feeling was too openly manifested to escape their observation; and they were guilty of no delay in retaliating. They knew that the Sultan was already weary of the control

of the Mameluke chiefs, and hastened to avail themselves of his impatience. "You have, in these emirs, enemies more dangerous than the Franks," said they. "These men aspire to your throne, and find this war favourable to their designs. Therefore hasten to make peace, that you may strengthen yourself against their efforts."

Touran-Chah listened to the suggestions of his courtiers ; and, flattered by their speeches, he resolved upon showing the Mameluke chiefs how little he regarded their opinions. Without condescending to consult them, he sent some of his courtiers to Louis, and empowered them to treat with the captive King.

"How much money," asked the ambassador, "will you give the Sultan for your ransom, besides restoring Damietta?"

"If," answered Louis, "the Sultan will be contented with a reasonable ransom, I will write to the Queen to pay it for myself and my army."

"But why," asked the ambassador, "do you want to write to the Queen?"

"Because," replied Louis, "she is my lady and companion ; and it is but reasonable that she should be asked for her consent."

"However," said the ambassador, "if the Queen will pay a million of golden bezants, you will be freed."

"As the King of France," said Louis with dignity, "I cannot be ransomed by money ; but

Damietta shall be given for my freedom, and a million of bezants for that of my army."

After some negotiations, the terms were agreed to on both sides; and the French knights and barons learned that the King had ransomed all his followers, both rich and poor. Arrangements were then made for restoring the crusaders to liberty; and four galleys were prepared to convey the chief captives to the mouth of the Nile. On reaching Pharescour, the King and his brothers were placed in a pavilion; while the knights, among whom were the Count of Brittany, Philip de Montfort, and the Sieur de Joinville, remained on board the galleys. After having been more than a month in fetters, the crusaders were naturally eager to be free; but the prospect was now not distant. It was the Thursday before the Feast of Ascension; and the Sultan had travelled by land from Mansourah with the object of receiving Damietta, and performing the conditions of peace on Saturday. Such was the state of affairs, when a tragical event, utterly unexpected, exposed the crusaders to new dangers and fresh trials.

The Sultan, it appears, had erected at Pharescour, on the margin of the Nile, a handsome palace, which the chroniclers of the period have fully described. The fearful tragedy of which it was the scene might well impress it on the memory of the crusaders. At the entrance of this palace, which was constructed of poles of wood covered with painted cloth, was a

pavilion, where the emirs left their swords when they had audiences. Beyond this pavilion was a handsome gateway, leading to a great hall; and adjoining it a tower, by which they ascended to the Sultan's chamber. In front of the palace was a spacious lawn, in which stood a tower, used by Touran-Chah for making observations, and an alley, leading to the river, on the edge of which stood a summer-house, formed of trellis-work and covered with Indian linen, in which he was in the habit of bathing.

Touran-Chah, on arriving at Pharescours, took up his residence in this palace on the Nile. It was there he received congratulations on his victory over the Franks; and there, in order to celebrate a triumph so signal, he gave a great banquet. All the chief Moslem warriors were present on the occasion; and everything went quietly and ceremoniously till the feast was at an end. No sooner, however, did the Sultan rise to ascend to his chamber, than his guests rushed furiously towards him. Bibars Bendocdar, who bore the Sultan's sword, inflicted a blow, which, being parried by the hand, cut up the arm between the fingers.

"My Lords," said Touran-Chah, "I complain to you against this man, who has endeavoured to kill me!"

"Better that you should be slain," they all replied, "than live to murder us, as you intend to do, when in possession of Damietta."

The Sultan was amazed and terrified. He sprang to his feet, however, and, bounding between the motionless guards, fled to the tower leading to his chamber. But the conspirators soon convinced him that his hopes of escape were vain.

"Come down," they cried; "you cannot escape us."

"I will willingly come down," said the Sultan, "if you will assure me of safety,"

"We will force you to descend," the conspirators shouted; and they prepared to assail the tower with Greek fire.

One hope still remained for the unfortunate Sultan. That was to rush down to reach the Nile, to cast himself into the water, and to seek refuge on board some of the vessels which he saw anchored near the shore. No sooner, therefore, did the Greek fire catch the cloth and timber, than he descended to the lawn and rushed from the blazing tower.* But, quick as thought, the conspirators were upon him; and Bibars Bendocdar dealt a thrust, so stern, that his sword remained sticking between the fugitive's ribs. Still resisting his fate, the Sultan plunged into the Nile, but nine of the conspirators, following with naked swords, killed him close to one of the galleys, from which the captive crusaders witnessed the scene.

All this time, Louis, shut up in a pavilion with

* "The whole was in a blaze," says Joinville; "and I promise you I never saw so fine or so sudden a bonfire."

his brothers, remained utterly unaware of what was occurring. Hearing a tumult, however, the King supposed either that Damietta had been taken or that the captive crusaders had been massacred. While he was occupied with the gloomiest thoughts, one of the Mamelukes suddenly entered the pavilion with blood on his hands.

“King,” cried the Mameluke, “what will you give me, who have slain an enemy, who, had he lived, would have put you to death? Speak,” he continued, seeing that Louis did not answer. “Knowest thou not that I am master of thy life? Make me a knight, or thou art a dead man.”

“Make thyself a Christian,” answered Louis, “and I will make thee a knight.”

The Mameluke, on hearing this, withdrew. The captive King, however, soon found that the danger was not over. Scarcely had the candidate for knight-hood disappeared, when a number of Saracens entered the pavilion, and, drawing their sabres, threatened Louis with instant destruction. But the Christian King was proof against their menaces; and the Saracens, impressed with the dignity of his demeanour in presence of danger, passed suddenly from rage to wonder. After offering him the throne of Egypt, they retired in respectful silence.

Meanwhile, Saracens, armed with swords and battle-axes, rushed on board the galleys, and threatened the French knights with death. No hope of escape

presented itself; and the Christian warriors, preparing for instant execution, confessed themselves hurriedly to the priests or to each other. The Mamelukes, however, were afraid to proceed to further bloodshed; and the crusaders, after passing a night of horrors, found that there was still a possibility of being restored to their countries and their homes.*

Ere this, the Mamelukes had completed their vengeance. After stabbing Touran-Chah with countless wounds, and hacking the body with brutal ferocity, they tossed the mangled remains on the banks of the Nile. At first it appeared that even sepulture was to be refused to the last Sultan of Saladin's line. But the Caliph's envoy interfered. Having obtained permission, the envoy proceeded to perform the obsequies privately; and, after lying exposed for two days, the corpse of Touran-Chah was laid, without pomp, in an obscure grave.

* "We were confined in the hold of the galleys," says Joinville, "and laid heads and heels together. We thought it had been so ordered, because they were afraid of attacking us when we were in a body, and that they would destroy us one at a time. This danger lasted the whole night. I had my feet right on the face of the Count of Brittany, whose feet, in return, were beside my face. On the morrow we were taken out of the hold; and the emirs sent to inform us that we might renew the treaties we had made with the Sultan."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SAINT-KING'S RETURN.

THE murderers of the last of the Ayoubites having, after much hesitation, arrived at the decision of maintaining the treaty concluded between Touran-Chah and the King of France, added as conditions, that, before being set at liberty, Louis should surrender Damietta, and that before leaving the Nile, he should pay half of the ransom.

After some discussion about the form of the oaths to be taken on the occasion, for the observance of the treaty, the Christians evacuated Damietta. On Friday, Queen Margaret, and the Countesses of Anjou, Poitiers, and Artois, were conveyed on board a Genoese galley; the keys of the city were delivered to the emirs; and next morning the Moslem standards waved over turret and tower.

It soon appeared, however, that the crusaders were not out of danger. Even at this stage, the propriety of putting the French King and his barons to death, was gravely discussed in an assembly of emirs; and only one of them advocated the **man**

tenance of faith. The voice of this personage would soon have been drowned in the tumult; but, fortunately for the crusaders, he used one argument which appealed to the cupidity of his audience. "You may put these Franks to death if you will," he said; "but before doing so, consider the consequence. Dead men pay no ransom."

This argument had so strong an effect on the emirs, that they resolved to fulfil the treaty; and the galleys which contained Louis and the companions of his captivity, were ordered to Damietta. The gold covenanted for having been paid, Louis, attended by the Count of Anjou, by the Count de Soissons, and the Sieur de Joinville, went on board a Genoese galley; and every difficulty having been surmounted, the fleet, bearing the remains of the Christian army, sailed from the Nile. After a voyage of a few days, the crusaders arrived at Acre.

Sad, but unsubdued, Louis remained four years in Syria, expecting aid from Europe to prosecute the Holy War. But all his hopes, in this respect, proved vain. His nobles deserted the oriflamme to return to their homes; his brother, whom he had sent to France to bring fresh forces, showed no eagerness to return; and the Pope continued too busily at feud with the potentates of Europe, to make any efforts on behalf of the Christians of Asia.

Meanwhile, the captivity of Louis caused profound grief among his subjects. The news that he was a

prisoner in the hands of the Saracens, created the utmost excitement in his kingdom ; and the shepherds of France, vowing to rescue him from the hands of his enemies, engaged in that strange enterprise which forms so melancholy a chapter in the history of the crusades.

It appears that, among the pastoral population of France, there suddenly appeared a man bearing a letter, to which he attached a mysterious importance. "This," said he, "I have received from the mother of God ; and it commands me to assemble all the Christian shepherds and herdsmen, and to march, at their head, to deliver our King. Follow me, then ; for the battle is not to the strong, but reserved, on this occasion, for the humble and the weak."

Fascinated by the eloquence and mystery of this man, the shepherds and herdsmen flocked to his standard ; and his army, swelled by crowds of outlaws and exiles, assumed formidable proportions. Even Queen Blanche, who was all anxiety for her son's release, at first favoured the enterprise of the shepherds ; but the priests, aware, perhaps, that the leaders had ulterior objects in view, set their faces against the movement, and speedily brought it into disrepute.

Finding the church hostile to their projects, the leaders of the shepherds endeavoured to excite the populace against the priests, and moreover avenged themselves by the massacre of several ecclesiastics. On hearing of this outrage, Queen Blanche changed

her tone ; and, taking part against the shepherds, determined on their suppression. One day, accordingly, when an orator of their body was declaiming, with armed men around for his protection, an executioner, employed by the Queen, suddenly glided behind the author of the movement, and struck off his head.

Ere the shepherds could recover from the horror caused by the decapitation of their leader, a body of soldiers rode into the crowd, and put them to the sword. Nor was this the worst ; for the peasantry, who, at first, had held the shepherds in high honour, suddenly suspected imposture, and slaughtered them without merey.

A year or two passed over, and while Louis was still in the Holy Land, he received intelligence of the death of Queen Blanche. This caused the King profound grief ; and for two whole days he remained in his chamber, without conversing with any one. On the third, however, he sent for Joinville, and immediately entered on the subject.

“Ah, Seneschal !” said the King, mournfully, “I have lost my mother.”

“Sire,” replied Joinville, “I am not surprised at it ; for you know death must come some time. But I am surprised that so great a prince should grieve so outrageously ; for you know, Sire, that the wise man sayeth, whatever grief the valiant man suffers in his mind, he ought not to show it on his

countenance, for he that does so, causes pain to his friends and pleasure to his foes."

"Seneschal," said a lady addressing Joinville, as he was leaving Louis, "I entreat you to wait on the Queen to comfort her; for she is in marvellous great grief."

"Madam," said Joinville, as, having yielded to the request, he approached Margaret of Provence, who was weeping bitterly, "I now know how true is the old proverb, which tells us never to believe in the tears of women; for all the lamentation you are now making, is for the woman whom of all others in the world you loved least."

"It is not for her I weep, Seneschal," exclaimed the Queen; "but it is for my lord, who is in such melancholy, and for my daughter, who will now be left to the care of men."

Soon after this scene, Louis announced his intention of returning to France; and, having embarked at Acre, in the spring of 1254, he set sail for his own dominions. In the autumn of that year the Saint-king arrived at Vincennes; and after proceeding to St. Denis and prostrating himself before the altar, made his entry into Paris, bearing on his forehead traces of the sorrow caused by multiplied disasters.

BOOK FOURTH.

THE LAST STRUGGLE.

CHAPTER I.

A SULTANA AND THE MAMELUKES.

IN the year 1250, when the assassination of Touran-Chah put an end to the Ayoubite dynasty, the Mamelukes were at a loss where to bestow the crown, that had for a century been worn by the members of that house, of which Saladin was the greatest. In their perplexity, they bestowed the sovereignty on a woman, named Chegger-Eddour, who, having originally been brought to Cairo as merchandise, and purchased by Melikul-Salih as a slave, had been elevated by her beauty and talent to the position of favourite Sultana. Accordingly, they proclaimed her "Queen of the Mussulmans," and associated with her in the government one of their own body, named Tureoman; and she, perhaps to prove how accommodating she was, made matters pleasant, by becoming Tureoman's wife.

The affairs of the Sultana, however, were not destined to go quite smoothly. The elevation of a woman to the Egyptian throne, filled Moslems with amazement; and the Caliph of Bagdad, who still preserved a shadow of power, and was in the habit of sending the Sultan of Egypt a rich robe by way of investiture, roused himself from voluptuous effeminacy, and asked, with indignation, if a man capable of reigning could not be found.

Alarmed at the discontent, Chegger-Eddour abdicated in favour of Turcoman; and Turcoman ere long found that he had put on a thorny crown. No sooner was he seated on the throne, than a conspiracy was formed, and the Sultan was in danger of sharing his predecessor's fate. Death, however, carried off his principal adversary; and the peril appeared to have passed over. But, unluckily, Turcoman at this crisis was indiscreet enough to aspire to the hand of an eastern princess; and his spouse giving way to anger, swore to be avenged.

The vengeance of the Sultana did not sleep. Soon after Turcoman had aroused her jealousy, one of his chief emirs was summoned at midnight to the palace. On hastening thither, the Emir presented himself in the chamber of Chegger-Eddour, and found her seated with one foot resting on the bleeding body of her husband. The Emir, astonished at the spectacle, uttered a cry of horror; but the Sultana calmly asked him to be seated, and pointed to a place by

her side. Terror-struck, the Emir was turning away, when she stated that she had commanded his presence in order to offer him her hand and her empire. Overcome with fear, the Emir fled from the palace.

When news crept through Cairo that the Sultan, while in a bath, had been assassinated by order of his spouse, much indignation was manifested; and the mother of the murdered man prepared to avenge his death. Her measures were soon taken. Chegger-Eddour was put to death by slaves, and her corpse cast into the ditch that surrounded the palace.

Amid the excitement caused by such startling scenes of horror, news that the Tartars had taken Bagdad, seized the Caliph, and immured him amid his treasures to die of hunger, aroused the Mamelukes to energy; and they elected as Sultan an Emir whom they deemed qualified, by courage and talent, to front the peril that menaced their empire.

The name of the new Sultan was Koutouz: and, being a Mameluke, confident and brave, he placed himself at the head of his army, encountered the Tartars at Tiberias, and impressed them with so high an idea of his power, that they retreated from Syria. Unfortunately for Koutouz, he happened, while in the vicinity of Acre, to renew a truce with the Christians; and this moderation was regarded by the Mamelukes with so much dislike, that they conspired to effect his ruin.

One day, while the Sultan's victorious army lay at

Sallhie, and when Koutouz had ridden forth to divert himself with hunting, a Mameluke, stained with blood, spurred into the camp, presented himself to the officer in command, and announced that the Sultan was no more.

"Koutouz is slain," said he in a tone of calm confidence.

"Koutouz slain!" exclaimed the officer; "who killed him?"

"It was I," answered the Mameluke coolly.

"In that ease," said the other, "you had better reign in his stead."

The Mameluke chief who had slain Koutouz was Bibars Bendocdar, and he was guilty of no hesitation at this crisis. Having been nominated by the Sultan's lieutenant as successor to the man whom he had murdered, the bold Mameluke was proclaimed by the army, and enthroned at Cairo.

No sooner had Bibars Bendoedar made a vow to complete the ruin of the Franks, than he rendered his name terrible; indeed, the Christians were speedily reduced to humility. After having seen their country repeatedly ravaged, without offering any resistance, they sent to implore peace. Without deigning an answer, Bibars seized Nazareth, and gave its church to the flames; ravaged the country between Nain and Mount Tabor, besieged and took Ceserea, seized Arsouf, took Jaffa, and sacked and burned Antioch. Everywhere the Sultan exercised the utmost cruelty.

The inhabitants of the conquered cities were put to the sword, or sold as slaves; the Mamelukes reserving as their portion the women, girls, and children. "There was not the slave of a slave," says the Arabian Chronieler, "that was not the master of a slave." Nothing now remained to the Christians but Aere and Tripoli.

Full accounts of the Sultan's exploits reached Europe by means of the two Grand Masters and the Archbishop of Tyre, who repaired to the West to implore aid. The erusades, however, had hitherto been attended with so little success, that few had any inelination to take the eross; and the Pope was too intent on the destruction of the House of Suabia, to feel any overpowering interest in the fate of the Eastern Christians. Nevertheless, their deplorable plight moved compassion; and the King of Arragon sent ambassadors to Cairo to demand peace for his brethren. But Bibars Bendoedar treated the messages of the King of Arragon with seorn; and, remembering what the French had suffered at Damietta, ridieuled the notion of any European prince coming to aid the Christians of Syria.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONQUEROR OF EVESHAM.

AT the time when Bibars Bendocdar was pursuing his victorious career in Palestine, there was often seen in England, riding about the country with dogs and falcons, and enthusiastically engaged in field sports, as if for him life had no other attraction, a prince, in his twenty-eighth year, whose presence seldom failed to command admiration. His complexion was fair; his hair light brown; his expression frank; his features regular; his brow marked with thought; and his eye bright with genius. But what most struck the beholder was his grand stature: for he was taller by the head and shoulders than ordinary men; and his limbs, which were elegantly proportioned, had been trained to the endurance of fatigue in forests, in tilt-yards, and on battle-fields. He was Edward Plantagenet, eldest son of the third Henry and Eleanor of Provence; and husband of a fair princess, afterwards well-beloved by the English people as Eleanor of Castille.

However absorbed Prince Edward might appear in

hunting and hawking, he had, in his day, been engaged in business more serious than chasing the deer at Windsor, or flying his falcons at Eltham. At an earlier period, while his chief delight was frequenting tournaments and exhibiting his prowess in the lists, he had been summoned from the Continent to aid in defending the English throne against Simon de Montfort and the Anglo-Norman nobles, and he had taken an energetic part in that fierce struggle known as "The Barons' War."

Montfort, second son of that Simon de Montfort who figured so conspicuously in the war against the Albigenes, was, in right of his mother, Earl of Leicester; and, having been banished from France for disturbing the government of Queen Blanche, he found refuge in England, and won the hand of Henry's sister, the widowed Countess of Pembroke. Scarcely, however, had Montfort become the brother-in-law of Henry, when disputes arose; and, as years passed on, the Earl became the King's mortal foe.

Henry the Third, a weak though well-meaning man, had surrounded the English throne with so many of his wife's continental kinsmen and his own, that a cry was raised by the Anglo-Norman barons that the land was devoured by aliens. Ere long, the clergy, the citizens, and the populace manifested their sympathy with the baronial prejudices, and the discontent became deep and general. At length the King and the barons appealed to the sword; and, after the

struggle had been maintained for years by skirmishes and sieges, they met on the 14th of May, 1264, to decide their quarrel, at Lewes, in Sussex.

At Lewes, Edward, then in his twenty-fifth year, commanded the King's cavalry, and, mounted on his celebrated steed Gray Lyard, commenced the battle by charging so vehemently, that he dispersed Montfort's van, to which he was opposed; and, coming into contact with the militia of London, chased the burgher-soldiers from the field so fiercely, that they never halted in their flight till they found safety at Croydon. On returning to Lewes, however, the Prince discovered how great had been his imprudence. Montfort had meanwhile won a complete victory: King Henry, and Richard Earl of Cornwall, who since his crusade had been elected King of the Romans, were his prisoners.

Undaunted at this mortifying circumstance, Edward challenged Montfort to another field. But Simon treated the Prince's bravado with contempt. "If," said he, "Sire Edward attempts more mischief, I will cause the heads of the captives to be struck off, placed on lances' points, and carried as ensigns for our army." In great alarm, Edward and his cousin, Henry of Cornwall, surrendered to save their fathers; and the Prince was sent to the castle of Dover.

Montfort now called a Parliament to confirm his power; but that assembly, contrary to his expecta-

tion, passed an order for the liberation of Edward. The Prince was in consequence removed from Dover Castle; but, in spite of Parliament, Montfort, who feared Edward's genius, treated him as a prisoner.

It happened, however, that Montfort's sons gave mortal offence to Gilbert de Clare, the young Earl of Gloucester, who was their father's chief ally. Upon this, Gloucester, who, as the most powerful of English nobles, was jealous of Montfort's supremacy, resolved on changing sides, and opened a correspondence with Roger de Mortimer, who had already been won over to the royal cause by the entreaties of his wife. Emboldened by Gloucester's communication, Mortimer sent Edward a swift steed, with a secret message to make his escape at a given signal.

Meanwhile Montfort, carrying the King and the Prince in his train, had moved westward to punish Gloucester for his change of sides, and kept his court during Whitsun week within the walls of Hereford. One day, while Montfort was in council with his friends, he was informed that the Prince had escaped. "Escaped!" exclaimed Montfort; "then by St. James's arm, he will find us work to do."

A great battle being now inevitable, the trumpet of war roused England to arms, and fighting-men gathered to the hostile standards. A campaign, which excited breathless interest, was the consequence; and the Prince and his more experienced, but far less gifted foe, exerted all their skill as war-chiefs. For a

time Montfort was confident of a crowning triumph ; but at length every delusion vanished.

It was the morning of the 4th of August, 1265, and Montfort lay in the abbey of Evesham, awaiting the arrival of his son Simon, who had been raising a force in Yorkshire, when informed that an army was approaching.

“My son, doubtless,” said Montfort.

“Alas ! great Earl,” was the answer, “it is not your son who comes, but your foe.”

“Then,” exclaimed Montfort mournfully, “may the Lord have mercy on our souls ; for our bodies are Prince Edward’s.”

No time now remained for farther discussion ; and Montfort, obliged to hazard a battle, drew up his army in a large field near the town of Evesham, and, placing his men in a circular form, prepared for a struggle. The baronial army, composed for the most part of nobles and their retainers, was certain to make a desperate resistance ; and the oligarch could not be altogether without hope of adding a decisive triumph to his many victories.

But whatever Montfort’s anticipations, the day opened inauspiciously for his party ; for the Earl had placed his Welsh allies in front, and when Edward, mounted on Gray Lyard, the good steed on which he “ever charged forward,” came upon them at the head of his knights, the Celtic warriors fled as hastily from Evesham as the Londoners had done from Lewes

Still Montfort's array was most formidable; and the Earl, showing himself a grim champion on that, his last field, several times repulsed Edward's fiery charge. But there could exist little doubt how the day would terminate.

After the conflict had lasted for hours, the sky was suddenly overcast; the lightning flashed; and the thunder rolled; and Montfort's heart failed him. However, he made a last desperate effort to baffle fortune; but his horse was killed under him, and his eldest son slain by his side.

"Is there any quarter for us?" he cried.

"What grace for such a traitor?" was the reply.

"Then," exclaimed Montfort, "may God have mercy on our souls," and with these words he fell, sword in hand, amidst a host of foes.

Having won the battle of Evesham, Edward used his victory with singular moderation, prevented any blood from being shed on the scaffold, and exerted his influence with so much effect to save the vanquished, that many foes were converted into friends. Disturbances, nevertheless, broke out; for Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, discontented with his share of the victory, and the citizens of London, enraged at being deprived of their charter, formed an alliance, and proceeded to fearful excesses. At Alnwick, also, John de Vesci held out for the barons.

Edward, not dismayed by the menacing aspect of affairs, boldly faced the insurrections in the south,

and succeeded in suppressing them, and bringing Gloucester to submission.

After bringing the Red de Clare and the Londoners to reason, Edward went northward to besiege the castle of Alnwick. Reduced to the utmost perplexity, John de Vesci yielded, and submitted to the mercy of his conqueror. Edward talked to the vanquished baron with that frank courtesy, which seldom failed to win manly hearts; and De Vesci became one of his most favoured knights.

It was when Edward had just accomplished the pacification of England, that Ottobon, cardinal-deacon of the title of St. Adrian, was sent to England as papal legate, and appeared in London to preach a crusade.

CHAPTER III.

THE SAINT-KING IN OLD AGE.

AT the time when Bibars Bendocdar was slaying and ravaging in Syria, and when Edward Plantagenet was hunting and hawking in England, Louis, King of France, summoned his barons to Paris.

The peers and prelates of France, thus invited to meet the King, assembled, in March, 1267, in a hall of the Louvre; and Louis, then in his fifty-fourth year, having entered with a crown of thorns in his hand, expatiated on the sufferings of the Christians of Syria, expressed his resolution of going to their relief, and exhorted all to take the cross. A cardinal, who was present as papal legate, seconded the King's exhortation; and having exerted all his eloquence to rouse the warriors of France, he presented the cross to Louis and three of those princes of whom Margaret of Provence had made the saintly monarch father. At the same time, the cardinal received the oaths of a number of knights and nobles.

The calamities of the expedition to Damietta had not been forgotten by the French nation; and it

appears that the determination expressed by Louis was heard with surprise and grief by the assembled magnates. In the King's presence, respect for his sanity prevented men from raising objections; but when his back was turned, regrets and apprehensions were freely expressed.

"Those who have advised the King to this crusade," exclaimed one knight, "have been guilty of a crime!"

"This day," said a second, "will prove one of the most fatal France ever witnessed."

"If we consent to take the cross," said a third, "we are the King's ruin."

"And," remarked a fourth, "if we take the cross, we lose God's grace; for we do not take the cross for the sake of Christ."

Joinville was among those present at Paris on the occasion; and he was strongly urged by the princes to embark for the East a second time. But Joinville remembered all the horrors endured twenty years earlier, and firmly resisted. "When I was before beyond sea on the service of God," he said, "the King's officers so grievously oppressed my people, that they were reduced to poverty. We have had great difficulty in recovering ourselves; and I see clearly that were I to undertake another crusade, it would be our ruin."

Notwithstanding the discontent created in France by the new crusade, the King commenced prepara-

tions, and fixed the time for his departure. Having raised money to defray the expences, he hired ships from the republic of Genoa, and announced his intention of sailing from France in the summer of 1270.

About the time when Louis was making his preparations, his brother, Charles of Anjou, had been invested by the Pope with the sovereignty of Sicily. Pretending, as King of Sicily, to all the rights enjoyed by the old Emperors of Germany, Charles claimed an annual tribute from Tunis, on the western coast of Africa. Not being in a position to compel payment without aid, and catching at the idea of turning the swords of the crusaders to account, he represented to Louis that the surest way to conquer the Holy Land was to begin with Tunis.

Louis readily entered into the scheme. In fact, the King of Tunis had more than once sent ambassadors to Paris, to declare that conversion to the Christian faith was his dearest wish; and Louis had frequently stated, that he would consent to pass his life in captivity, if, by such a sacrifice, he could bring the Moorish prince to a knowledge of the truth.

Meanwhile, the projected expedition of Louis created much excitement throughout Europe, and the Kings of Castille, Arragon, Navarre, and Portugal took the cross. At the same time, the Earls of Brittany and Flanders, the Counts of Eu, Cham-

pagne, Artois, La Marche, and Soissons, with the Seigneurs de Montmorency, Nemours, and Brienne, swore to combat the infidel.

Bibars Bendoedar must have paused in alarm, when intelligence of the preparations making for his destruction reached his ears. It was not ordered, however, that the bold Sultan should meet these European kings and princes in the shock of war. Scarcely one of them, indeed, had any wish to reach the land they had vowed to save. But there was still hope for the Christians of the East. A few hundred Anglo-Norman warriors were stitching crosses of red silk on their mantles, and preparing to charge the Saracens in the chain armour in which they had fought at Lewes and at Evesham.

CHAPTER IV.

PRINCE EDWARD AND HIS KNIGHTS.

ABOUT the time when the Conqueror of Evesham had accomplished the pacification of England, King Louis sent messengers begging Edward to grant him an interview on business of importance, and the Prince, without delay, travelled to Paris to meet his royal relative.

"Sire Edward," said King Louis, embracing the English Prince as the latter presented himself to the royal Saint, "you know that I intend returning to the Holy Land, and I have sent for you to express my wish to have such a comrade in chastising the pagans."

"My Lord," said Edward frankly, "you know that the substance of England has been entirely consumed during the war between King and Barons; and my means are too small to enter upon such an enterprise in your company."

"But," said Louis, "I will lend you thirty thousand marks of good money, or, in fact, I will give you that sum, if you will meet my wishes."

"In that ease," said Edward, "I see no impediment to my accompanying you."

After this interview with Louis, Edward returned to England; and Ottobon, the papal legate, in a council held at Northampton, exhorted the faithful to save what remained of the Christian kingdom in the East. At the same time, the cross was solemnly taken by Edward and his brother Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, as also by Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, and many other knights and nobles.

The Papal Legate having conferred the cross on a hundred and twenty English knights, and the Franciscan friars having persuaded many persons of inferior rank to assume the sacred badge, Edward devoted his whole attention to preparations for the voyage. Louis agreed to furnish Edward with thirty thousand marks; and Edward mortgaged to Louis the customs of Bordeaux for seven years. The royal Saint, indeed, appears to have driven a hard bargain, and to have required ample security. Not only did he require King Henry to sign the bond for repayment, but he stipulated that in the event of its not being refunded, he should be at liberty to seize all Edward's goods within the realm of France. The Warrior-prince, of course, submitted, as poor men are in the habit of doing under such circumstances, and no doubt rejoiced to receive, on any terms, what must have appeared to him an amount quite the reverse of insignificant.

At the same time, a sum of money reached Edward from a quarter, whence it might least have been expected. Between the Prince and the democracy of London, no approaches to reconciliation had yet been made. The quarrel, in truth, was somewhat serious, and the injuries somewhat deep. The citizens had attempted to drown the Prince's mother at London Bridge; and the Prince had on the downs at Lewes marked out their militia as the object of his fiercest attack. Edward, however, was far too great a man to bear malice towards inferiors; and he was far too proud to deem a deluded democracy worthy of his vengeance. Before leaving England, therefore, he strongly recommended the King to restore the city's charter; and Henry, after some manifestations of reluctance, listened to reason. The charter was accordingly restored; and the citizens evinced their gratitude to the Prince by contributing five hundred marks towards the expense of the crusade.

This dispute having been settled, King Henry, on the 4th of August, 1270, held a Parliament at Winchester, and, with much solemnity, delivered to Edward the cross which he himself had taken years before, and which he had since worn. At the same time, the barons present acknowledged Edward's son John as heir to the crown, in the event of the Warrior-prince falling in the East, and the King of the Romans was appointed guardian of the royal boy.

Everything being thus arranged, the Prince prepared to set forth.

Years before this period, Edward had espoused Eleanor of Castille, sister of that wise Alphonso, who occupies so conspicuous a place in the history of Spanish law and literature. This Princess was one of the most admirable beings in Christendom, and as beautiful as she was good. A woman of twenty-five, with long rich tresses clustering over a brow that beamed with intelligence, or falling in waves over shoulders fair and faultless; a swan-like neck; an eye rendered thoughtful by the clouds that had hung over her husband's fortunes; delicate features, through which shone sweetness of temper, frequently lighted up with a serene smile; a form somewhat tall and singularly graceful; a manner grave, serious, and with something of that solemnity, which centuries of intercourse with the Moors had communicated to the inhabitants of her native land: such was Eleanor of Castille at the time when her husband was about to fare forth to fight beneath the cross in Palestine.

When Edward was preparing to depart, men of experience strongly recommended Eleanor to remain at home; but the Princess took a different view of her duty.

"Consider," they said, "what are the dangers of a crusade, and recall the peril to which other ladies have been exposed."

“Speak not to me of dangers!” exclaimed Eleanor with animation; “nothing ought to part those whom God has joined; and the way to heaven is as near from Syria as from England or my native Castille.”

Eleanor remained firm in her determination to cross the Channel, and, on the 5th of August, Edward bade King Henry adieu; and the father and son parted, never to meet again on earth. On leaving Winchester, the intention of the Prince was to embark at Portsmouth, and pass through Spain, with a view of holding an interview with his brother-in-law, Alphonso of Castille; but, the winds proving contrary, and much time being lost, he abandoned the idea, and turned aside to embark at Dover.

It was the 20th of August, 1270, when Edward left the shores of England; nor was the heir of the Plantagenets unworthily attended. Gloucester’s proud Earl did not, indeed, appear; but warriors as gallant as ever sailed for Palestine arrayed themselves under Edward’s banner. Among them were Edmund of Lancaster, and Henry of Cornwall, Roger de Clifford, William de Valence, Thomas de Clare, John de Gourney, Robert de Tiptoft, Walter de Molesworth, John de Vesei (Edward’s favourite knight), Robert de Burnel (destined, in after years, to figure as his great minister), and Robert de Brus, father of the Hero-king of Scots. Nor was Scotland unrepresented among that martial chivalry. From the north of the Tweed had come a gallant band, conspicuous

among whom were David, Earl of Athol, and Adam, Earl of Carrick. What wonder if these crusaders went forth with high hopes! Young, ardent, and enthusiastie, led by a captain who had struck down a mighty oligarchy, and filled Europe with the fame of his knightly exploits, they might well cherish the hope of accomplishing something worthy of being recorded by chroniclers and celebrated by minstrels.

The mariners hauled up their anchors, and spread their sails; and the English crusaders left the white cliffs of their native shore behind. It appears that Edward hoped to make so quick a journey as to overtake King Louis before that royal crusader embarked; but after meeting the Princess, who had preceded him to the continent, and travelling through France and along the borders of Spain, our great Prince learned that Louis had already sailed, and also, doubtless to his surprise, that the Saint-king, instead of embarking for Syria as arranged, had intimated his intention of proceeding to Tunis. Trusting still to join the King of France, ere anything great had been accomplished, Edward, though perhaps not much relishing such a voyage, directed his course towards the African coast.

CHAPTER V.

THE FRENCH AT TUNIS.

WHILE Edward was in England preparing for the crusade, and overcoming the obstacles that delayed his departure, the Kings of the Continent began to move.

Alphonso of Castille had taken the cross; but, having claims on the crown of Germany, that monarch declared his inability to proceed to the East. Alphonso, however, furnished his neighbour, James, King of Arragon, with a thousand knights and a thousand maravedis in gold. At the same time, the knights of St. James, and the cities of Barcelona and Majorca, aided the King of Arragon with men, money, and ships; and James, with a formidable fleet, sailed from Barcelona. The elements, however, proved adverse to the King and his friends: and a violent tempest having dispersed the fleet, his own vessel was cast on the coast of Languedoc.

Nothing daunted by this disastrous opening of the expedition, King Louis continued his preparations; and having, early in March, 1270, received the symbols of

pilgrimage from the church of St. Denis, and walked barefooted from the Louvre to Nôtre Dame to hear a solemn mass, he took leave of Queen Margaret, whom he was not destined to see again, and repaired to Aigues Mortes, where his army was to embark.

Few of the crusaders had come to the rendezvous, and Louis was under the necessity of reminding them of their vows. His example and exhortations proved effectual; and ere long his brother, the Count of Poitiers, and many of the chief nobles of France, gathered around his standard. Several of the cities likewise sent forth bands of warriors to fight for the cross under their saintly King; and Louis found himself attended by his sons, Philip, heir of France, and John, Count of Nevers, and by his son-in-law the King of Navarre, and surrounded by a gallant and chivalrous host.

Nor on this occasion, notwithstanding the absence of Margaret of Provence, were bright eyes and fair faces wanting to cheer and inspire the champions of the cross: for among those who placed themselves under the protection of St. Louis were his daughter, the Queen of Navarre; his daughter-in-law, the wife of Philip; his sister-in-law, the Countess of Poitiers; and other ladies of high rank and noble name.

While chivalrous warriors were congregated, and feudal banners displayed at Aigues Mortes, a strange band of crusaders presented themselves. From the bogs, the islets, and the marshes of Friesland, five

hundred men, arrayed in leathern jerkins, in waistcoats of horse-cloth, and in rusty coats of mail, came to take part in the expedition. "At all times," said they, as they ranged themselves under the oriflamme, "our nation has been proud to obey the Kings of France."

Everything now looked promising. Crusaders from Castille and other parts of the Spanish Peninsula swelled the French army; and Louis, without waiting for Prince Edward, who, though too poor to be deemed of much importance, would, in all probability, being a man of unrivalled genius, have enabled the aged monarch to avoid many of the evils that awaited him, embarked at Aiguës Mortes early in July, and in a few days anchored off Cagliari.

It was the 20th of July, a whole month before Edward sailed from Dover, when the French King appeared in sight of Carthage; and no sooner did the fleet become visible from the shore, than the inhabitants fled to their mountains. Next morning, at dawn, the crusaders began to land; and when the whole army had disembarked, opposite the ruins of Carthage, Louis pitched his camp, formally took possession of the territory, seized a tower at the point of the cape, lodged the women and the sick in a village hard by, and sent soldiers to place the standard of France on the castle of Carthage. Having taken these steps, the King ordered his men to pitch their tents, and awaited the arrival of his brother, the King of Sicily.

While Louis was looking eagerly for the appearance of the Sicilian fleet, and deluding himself with the hope of converting the King of Tunis, that Moorish prince sent a messenger to intimate his intention of giving the crusaders battle, at the head of a hundred thousand men; and added, with a sneer, which dissipated all the French monarch's hopes of making a convert, that he should require baptism on the field of fight. Louis received this insulting message with patient composure. It was well, by-the-bye, for the Bey that our Edward had not then arrived. Had Longshanks been before Tunis that day, the Moorish prince might have found, to his cost, that all Christians were not saints, and that all crusaders were not missionaries.

Edward and his knights, however, were still on the sea, and Louis remained inactive. Perhaps he expected to be attacked. But the Bey did not fulfil his threat; and the French were beginning to regard their enemies with contempt, when they learned, not certainly without emotions of awe, that Bibars Bendocdar, the terrible Sultan of Egypt, was preparing to march to the relief of Tunis.

While such was the position of affairs, and the crusaders, with the prospect of encountering so formidable a foe, were looking somewhat wistfully for the sails of the King of Sicily, the climate, the hot winds, and the want of water, began to be severely

felt; and suddenly the plague invaded the French camp. The consequences were fearful: for soon so many men of all ranks yielded to the influence of that dire disease, that it became impossible to bury the dead; and the corpses, thrown confusedly into the ditches of the camp, added to the infection of the atmosphere.

At length, after thousands of the crusaders had fallen victims to the climate, the Pope's Legate and the Count de Nevers, the king's son, yielded to the pestilence. Louis, who was also prostrate, heard of their deaths with grief and tears; and soon after became so ill, that no hope could be entertained of his recovery. Finding his end drawing nigh, Louis employed some hours in giving advice to Philip the Bold, his heir; and then, abandoning himself wholly to offices of religion, caused his attendants to lay him, covered with hair-cloth, upon a bed of ashes. On the 25th of August, he appeared slightly to revive, but it was only for a brief period; and, feeling his last moments approach, he opened his eyes, looked towards heaven, and exclaimed—"I will enter into Thy house; I will worship in Thy holy tabernacle;" and, with this pious ejaculation, the Saint-king gave up his soul to God.*

* "On the brow of a green hill, overlooking the entire plain of Carthage, is a high octagonal wall; and, in the centre of the enclosure within, arises the small Gothic chapel, built, as is believed, on the site of the tent where the sainted crusader died

On the day when Louis died, and while gloom overspread the camp, Charles of Anjou, brother of the Saint-king, arrived at Tunis, and took the command of the French army. Several conflicts with the Moors ensued. But it soon appeared that on neither side was there any strong desire to continue the war; and when the Bey of Tunis offered to treat, the French did not decline to open negotiations. Terms were soon agreed upon. The Moorish prince, in his anxiety to get rid of the invaders, offered to allow Christian priests free exercise of their religion in his capital; to tolerate the profession of Christianity by such of the Saracens as might be converted; to defray the whole expense of the crusade; and to pay yearly to Charles of Anjou the sum of forty thousand crowns. On these terms the crusaders consented to relinquish their enterprise; and Philip, the young King of France, having negotiated a treaty, prepared to return to Europe.

The peace concluded between the King of Tunis and Philip of France, however agreeable to Charles of Anjou, was not destined to give universal satisfaction. Bibars Bendoedar expressed the utmost indignation at the conduct of the Bey of Tunis. "Such a prince," said the Sultan, "ought to be dethroned: he is unworthy to reign over Mussulmans." At the same

in the midst of his dying soldiers, and bearing an inscription which informs us, that it was erected by Louis Philippe to the memory of his pious ancestor."—*Bartlet's Overland Route.*

time, many of the crusaders expressed their regret. "What," they indignantly asked, "would Christendom say on hearing that the crusaders had fled before their vanquished foes, and robbed themselves of their own victory?"

CHAPTER VI.

EDWARD ON HIS VOYAGE.

WHILE the French murmured at the inglorious close of their expedition to Africa, and while Bibars Bendoedar raged at the news of the sacrifices made by his Moorish ally, the conqueror of Evesham and the English crusaders, who at Sardinia had heard of the death of St. Louis, reached Tunis.

Edward's arrival, when proclaimed in the Christian camp, spread joy among the crusaders. In their peril and perplexity, the European knights were delighted at the idea of having among them the most famous of their order; and through the great heart of the Prince, as his blue eye scanned the noble army encamped before the Moorish capital, thrilled anticipations of fortresses taken and fields won. But scarcely had Edward landed, and condoled with the Kings of Sicily and France on the death of their saintly relative, and intimated his readiness to lead them against the infidels without delay, than his visions of victory were rudely put to flight.

“The Bey of Tunis,” said Charles of Anjou, “is prepared to render satisfaction to all the crusaders for the cost of their expedition, and to pay the tribute so long due to me as King of Sicily.”

“For what, my Lord, do you take me?” exclaimed the Prince in amazement, and in a tone which convinced the barons of France that the day was gone by for talking of “English tails” or assuming airs of superiority. “Deem you that I and my friends have left England to exact tribute from Pagans and pirates? No, by Holy Edward; but to make war against the enemies of the cross, and to recover, if possible, the city of Jerusalem!”

“Nevertheless,” was the answer of Charles of Anjou, “the treaty has been negotiated. Wherefore, let us return to Sicily; and, when the winter is past, we can sail to Acre.”

Mortified was Edward on hearing of the peace that had been concluded. He determined, however, not to return to England without signalling his prowess against the foes of his religion; and, holding aloof from the councils of the crusaders, he refused to take any part in concluding the peace, or any portion of the gold which had bribed them to go home. Others were less scrupulous, however; and, after the Bey had sent to the Christian camp thirty-two camels, heavily laden with gold and silver, the warriors of the cross, on the 18th of November, embarked for Sicily.

The voyage of the crusaders proved most disastrous. When about to enter the port of Trapani, their fleet was assailed by a tempest, and the results were frightful. Eighteen ships, with horses, armour, equipments, and the gold received from the Bey of Tunis, were submerged; and four thousand warriors, whom the plague had spared on the coast of Carthage, found a watery grave off the coast of Sicily.

Having landed at Trapani after this misfortune, the crusaders held several councils to determine what course they were to pursue. Every leader deplored the loss he had sustained during the tempest; and Charles of Anjou, with an eye to his own interest, proposed that they should attempt the conquest of Constantinople, which had been recently recovered by the Greeks. But this project failed to enlist general sympathy. King Philip expressed his intention of returning forthwith to France; and the Christian princes and nobles agreed, for the present, to lay aside the cross. In order to deceive each other, however, they all took a solemn oath to resume the crusade at a subsequent period, and they even appointed the day on which they were to embark for Acre.

The English knights now looked blank, and appeared to consider a return to England inevitable. But Edward witnessed with indignation the cowardice and hypocrisy of the kings and princes who figured in

the scene. "Though all my comrades in arms and my countrymen should desert me," he said, striking his breast, "yet I, with Fowin, my palfrey keeper, will enter Acre. By Holy Edward," he exclaimed, his eye kindling and his form dilating as he spoke, "I will keep my oath, though in so doing my soul should be parted from my body." On hearing their Prince's resolution to persevere, De Clare, De Vesci, De Brus, and the other English knights, indicated their willingness to share the peril and minister to the success of his enterprise.

But though the crusaders from England expressed their determination to rescue the endangered Christians of Syria, the heir of St. Louis exhibited no scruple in abandoning those whom he had vowed to succour. Indeed, Philip was now all anxiety to take possession of his throne; and no sooner had the year 1271 opened, than he set out for France.

Meantime, Edward of England remained for the winter in Sicily, passing his time in chivalrous exercises, and not neglecting, perhaps, to reduce to military discipline the Frieslanders, who had joined St. Louis at Aigues Mortes, and who now recognised the Prince as their leader. Undaunted by desertion and difficulties, Edward clung with tenacity to his purpose, and, by showing a high example, inspired his friends with enthusiasm worthy of the occasion.



MOUNT CARMEL.

Crusades and Crusaders.]

CHAPTER VII.

RELIEF OF ACRE.

ABOUT the beginning of April, 1271, Bibars Bendocdar, Sultan of Egypt, at the head of a mighty army, appeared before the walls of Acre, and summoned the city to surrender. The inhabitants were naturally in extreme alarm. It was true, that the Sultan had several times threatened Acre without proceeding to extremities; but, on this occasion, there remained little hope of such forbearance being exercised. Indeed Bibars Bendocdar indicated, in a manner not to be mistaken, his determination to remain at the foot of Mount Carmel, till he had witnessed the downfall of the famous stronghold of the Christians in the East.

At that time Acre, now little more than a fortress in the sea, was celebrated for wealth and splendour. Having long been regarded by the crusaders as next in importance to Jerusalem, the city had gradually been enriched. Thither most of the Christians, driven from other places in Palestine, fled for refuge; and thither they brought such wealth as could be moved

beyond reach of the spoiler's hands. Acre had thus become the capital of the Christians in the East, and by far the richest of the cities of Syria.

Nor were the fortifications of Acre such that any foe could calculate on finding its wealth an easy prey. During his abode in the East, St. Louis had laboured to repair and increase the means of resistance, and added much to the strength of the place. On the land side, the city was surrounded by a double wall, with battlemented towers, and by a deep and broad ditch, which prevented access to its ramparts; while, towards the sea, it was defended by the castle of the Templars, by the "King's Tower," and by a fortress at the entrance of the harbour. Constructed of square stones, the houses of Acre all rose to an equal height; and most of them were surmounted by a terrace. The interior of the city was chiefly occupied by the abodes of traders and artisans; but, between two ramparts, that bounded the city on the east, hard by the tower and gate of St. Anthony, destined to be celebrated in story, stood the castles and palaces of the King of Jerusalem, the Prince of Antioch, the representatives of France and Sicily, and other men of high estate. Inside, the mansions were furnished with articles of luxury, ornamented with rich pictures, and lighted by windows of painted glass, that pleasantly modified the sun's glare.

And strange and picturesque was the scene presented at Acre to a Valence or De Vescei, who, having

assumed the cross, and vowed to fight for the Holy Sepulchre, landed at the white walls bathed by the blue waters of the Mediterranean. Ships from Europe and Asia crowded the commodious port. Rich merchandise was stored in the warehouses. Bustle and excitement prevailed on the Exchange. A motley assemblage of sea-faring men, monks and merchants, pirates and pilgrims, warriors and women, appeared in the streets; and in the public places, which were screened by silken coverings from the heat of the sun, Christian magnates, attended by splendid trains, and wearing golden crowns and vestments glittering with precious stones, walked frequently to show themselves to the people.

But, unfortunately, Acre was divided against itself. Every nation had its quarter, and each quarter was a city of itself, varying in language, manners, and race from its neighbours, and separated from them by rivalries and jealousies, that frequently produced riot and bloodshed. Sometimes the magnates assembled to devise measures for maintaining order; but they generally, by disagreeing among themselves, rendered the prospect of concord more distant than before.

Such being the state of affairs, Acre was in no condition to resist a prolonged siege by a conqueror so energetic as Bibars Bendoedar. The Mameluke Sultan had long been aware of the fact, and hitherto his ambition to enter Acre, sword in hand, had been

repressed by the news of a host of erusaders being on the way to rescue their distressed brethren. The death of Louis, however, and the return of the French army to Europe, had freed the Oriental warrior from this dread; and he indulged in the anticipation of crowning his victories.

This resolution formed, Bibars Bendocdar encamped before Aere. With his army he brought arrows, and darts, and fire-pots, and maehines for battering walls with stones, and leaden balls, and huge blocks of wood; and, having caused the Mameluke horsemen to ravage the territories in the vicinity of the beleaguered city, he commenced the siege. Slender now appeared the prospect of the Mussulman soldiers having to cross the desert without reddening their weapons with Christian blood.

The inhabitants of Acre were perplexed in the extreme. The nearness of the peril would naturally have united them, but it appeared too late. From their ramparts they saw turbaned foes desolating their fertile plains, cutting up groves and gardens, and burning the villages and pleasure-houses that dotted the hills; while the Sultan was preparing to assail their walls and effect their ruin. Filled with alarm, and driven to despair, they consented to surrender in four days, if not relieved before that time. Scarcely one ray of hope found its way to their hearts.

But suddenly a marvellous change occurred. Ere

the four days had passed, a clangour of drums and clarions resounded in Acre; and through the city ran a rumour that a fleet with warriors on board was approaching their harbour. Some rushed to the house-tops, and others rushed to the port, to watch the result. The little fleet sailed gallantly into the harbour; men in mail, surrounding a lady with a calm, thoughtful countenance, appeared upon one of the decks; a warrior, simply arrayed, but taller by the head than ordinary mortals, and with a form as magnificent as his stature was tall, leaped ashore. It was the Conqueror of Evesham.

Bibars Bendocdar must have heard the shout that rose from the quay of Acre, and gradually swelled as it ran from street to street, and from house-top to house-top. Perhaps one of those mysterious emotions which warn men of approaching danger, touched the heart of the crowned criminal. In any case, the Sultan, ere long, learned that a fair-haired warrior was resting his long limbs in the palace of Acre, and that a gray charger was eating his provender from a marble manger in a Syrian stall.

CHAPTER VIII.

EDWARD IN THE EAST.

EARLY in the spring of 1271, Edward, accompanied by his fair spouse, and Theobald, Archdeacon of Placentia, his old tutor, left the shores of Sicily and sailed for Acre. Small was the force with which the English prince went to rescue the imperilled Christians of Syria. His brother, Edmund Crouchback, Earl of Lancaster; his brother-in-law, John, Earl of Brittany; his beloved friends, Robert de Brus, John de Vesci, and Thomas De Clare, with three hundred English knights, and the Frieslanders who had left Aigues Mortes with St. Louis, formed the force with which he went to encounter Bibars Bendocdar.

Before proceeding to Acre, Edward landed at Cyprus, and having been received by the King and nobles of that island with the honours due to his rank and reputation, continued his voyage towards the imperilled city. No sooner had the Prince landed at Acre, than he climbed the walls, viewed Bendocdar's army, and ascertained the extent of territory



LANDING OF THE CONQUEROR OF EVESHAM AT ACRE.

which the Christians still called their own. The scene which lay before the great Prince's eye, must have suggested melancholy thoughts. He could not delude himself with the idea of changing the fortune of the East at the head of so slender a force as that which he had brought to Acre; but he must have reflected, with a sigh, what a mighty part he might have played in "the world's debate," had he come at the head of such an army, as had over and over again been ruined and lost for want of a leader of capacity. As it was, he could only lament the plight to which the empire of Godfrey had been reduced.

But small as was Edward's army, his arrival changed the Sultan's plans. Every Mameluke warrior heard with consternation that he was of the same regal race as Richard Cœur de Lion, the fame of whose prowess still lingered in the East; and Bibars Bendocdar no sooner became aware that Edward Plantagenet was in Acre, than he evinced his alarm, gathered in his warriors, and beat a retreat.

The arrival of Edward and the retreat of Bibars, revived the hopes of the Eastern Christians; and around the Prince gladly came the Templars and the Knights of St. John. With their aid he planned an expedition; for the idea of remaining idle was not one to be entertained. Within a month after his landing, Edward left the Princess at Acre, placed himself at the head of a little army, and advanced

upon the Mussulman territories. After having seen his force increase to the number of seven thousand men, he marched towards Nazareth.

A well-built town situated about six miles from Mount Tabor, in a narrow valley, with flat-roofed houses of two storeys, and environs planted with fig-trees, olive-trees, and vines: such is Nazareth, in the nineteenth century. At the time of the crusades, this town was regarded with peculiar veneration, as the place in which the Saviour of mankind had passed his earlier years; and, within its limits, the crusaders erected, in honour of the Virgin, a church, which was considered the most beautiful of all the structures raised by the Christians in the East. Shortly before Edward's arrival at Acre, Bibars Bendoedar having taken Nazareth from the Christians, rendered the occasion memorable by giving the church of St. Mary to the flames; and so bitter was the indignation felt by the faithful at this act of destruction, that when Edward turned towards Nazareth, the crusaders thanked God that the day of vengeance had arrived.

Edward, though squeamish about shedding the blood of English peasants, had probably no scruples about the slaughter of "Pagan dogs." Advancing upon Nazareth, he resolved on taking the place by storm; and fearful was the carnage that ensued. With a craving for revenge gnawing at their hearts, the crusaders assaulted the town; and entering, sword

in hand, cut down all who opposed. No quarter was given. The cry of "Remember the burning of St. Mary's church," was sufficient to drown every appeal for mercy; and the crusaders only ceased from the work of carnage to plant the Christian standard on the walls.

After garrisoning Nazareth, Edward set out on his return to Acre. Ere proceeding a few miles, however, he received intelligence, that an army of Saracens was coming in pursuit, with the hope of surprising him in a narrow pass, and of retaking the town. Not a moment was lost. The victorious crusaders, immediately turning back, met their foes face to face; and the Saracens, suddenly attacked, sustained such a defeat as convinced them of the prowess of the foe whom they had to encounter.

But Bibars Bendocdar was not a man to despair; and the crusaders had scarcely time to rest from their fatigues, when information reached Edward that the Saracens were mustering at Kakhov, about fifteen miles from Acre, and preparing to come and offer him battle. "Ha!" exclaimed the English Prince, with a spirit as high as he exhibited on a similar occasion twenty-six years later, "they shall not need to come to find me; for I will forthwith go to seek them!"

Everything was quickly prepared for an expedition; and on the evening of Tuesday, the 23rd of June, the crusaders learned that, before daybreak,

war-steeds must be saddled and warriors mounted. Long ere sunrise, Edward issued from Acre at the head of his army, and directed his course towards the Saracenic camp. A small force, indeed, his appeared, with which to go on such an enterprise; but stout were the hearts and strong the hands of the Christian warriors, as they moved onward, confident in the genius of their chief and the grandeur of their cause.

Chroniclers have failed to hand down to us any detailed account of Edward's operations in the East; and, considering the achievements which history has had to record of that mighty Prince as the English Justinian, it is not wonderful, that his exploits as a crusader should have been allowed to fall into the background. Sufficient has, however, been chronicled to show how rapidly and widely his fame spread in the East, and to give an idea of the last field, on which the warriors of Christendom did battle for the recovery of their Saviour's sepulchre.

It was the morning of Wednesday, the 24th of June, 1271; and the force of Bibars Bendoedar was drawn together at Kakhaw, where there was a castle. The Saracenic warriors were bent upon a great effort to crush their foes; and the Saracenic poets were probably celebrating Edward's prospective defeat and death.

While the Saracens were passing "the space of dim hazy dawn which forms the twilight of a Syrian

morning," in dreams of victory, they became aware of the approach of foes; and, with banners displayed and lances gleaming, the crusaders advanced to the attack. Well did the turbaned soldiers of Bibars Bendocdar know the approaching warriors. On that point, at least, there could hardly have been a mistake. The Templars were there with their white mantles and red crosses; and the Knights of St. John, in their black robes, with five white crosses on each in memory of the five wounds of Christ; and strangely mingling and contrasting with the crusaders from Friesland in waistcoats of horsecloth and rusty jackets, appeared the English chivalry, trained to arms in the Barons' War, and eager to prove their piety and their patriotism. William de Valence, and John de Vesci; John de Gourney, and Odo de Grandison; Roger de Clifford, and Thomas de Clare; Robert de Brus, John of Brittany, and Edmund Crouchback, Earl of Lancaster, with silken surcoats over their chain mail, must have appeared no contemptible foes, as they clustered around "Sire Edward" on that midsummer morning, when he rode to Kakhov and offered battle to the enemies of his religion. Few, indeed, they were; but Bibars Bendocdar was destined to learn, that Christendom had never sent gallanter men to fight for the cross, than were found in that little band of Englishmen.

Nothing daunted, we will suppose the Saracens to have sprung to arms; beat their drums, and pre-

pared for resistance. But, however that may have been, it soon appeared, that against the army led by the Conqueror of Evesham, their valour was vain. Templars and Knights of St. John dyed their lances in infidel blood: Edward's knights exhibited a courage worthy of the flower of Anglo-Norman chivalry; and, dashing aside turban and buckler, the Frieslanders rushed on without a thought of merey, and, in the name of their Redeemer, slew the unbelieving foe.

But in the conflict Edward must have been by far the most formidable champion of the cross. Indeed, when the imagination is conducted by a train of historical associations to the thirteenth century, it is not easy, in that dauntless and too-adventurous soldier, to recognise the calm English statesman, who rendered his memory immortal by the laws which he instituted. Mounted on his gray steed, now charging forward at the head of his knights, dispersing the amazed foe—now retreating to re-form his little band or to engage, hand-to-hand, with some stalwart Saracen, this English Prince, already great as a warrior, and destined to prove far greater as legislator and administrator, by his marvellous prowess appears to have produced on the oriental imagination, an impression not less strong than had, in other days, been made by Robert Curthose, with his paladin-like courage, or by Richard Cœur de Lion with his mighty strength.*

"In these skirmishes," says Fuller, "he gave evident testimonies of his personal valour. Yea, in cold blood, he would

At length the Saracens were smitten hip and thigh; and, a multitude of his soldiers having fallen, the host of Bibars Bendocdar gave way. Their mighty adversary appeared to be gifted with supernatural strength; and when Edward, on Gray Lyard, charged upon the Sultan's ranks, Mahomet could not have sustained their courage. Emir and Baharite alike recoiled before the strong steed and the tall rider: and, leaving their camp to the victors, they disappeared from the lost field.

While the Saracens were flying wherever they deemed that safety could be found, the crusaders entered the deserted camp, and had the gratification of finding "much booty." This operation over, they left the field to the eagles and vultures, that, with unerring instinct, came down from the mountains to prey upon the bodies of the slain; and proceeded to a stronghold, situated on the sea coast, and known as the Castle of the Pilgrims. At this fortress, the remarkable ruins of which are still to be seen, the crusaders, during Wednesday night, found quarters; and, on Thursday morning, they returned in triumph to Acre.

boldly challenge any infidel to a duel. To speak truth, this his conceived perfection was his greatest imperfection; for the world was abundantly satisfied in the point of his valour. Yet such was his confidence of his strength, and eagerness of honour, that having merited the esteem of a most stout man, he would still supererogate; yea, he would prefer to fight with any mean person, if cried up by the *volge* for a tall man."

Having been received with much applause by the Christians in Acre, and joined by the King and nobles of Cyprus, Edward began to dream of accomplishing something great, and prepared for a third expedition. Arrangements having been made, his trumpets once more sounded to horse; and marching, in the month of August, as far as the castle of St. George, the Prince took possession of that stronghold. No foe, however, appeared to oppose Edward's progress, and nothing farther could be achieved. Indeed, when the Syrian Christians discovered that the English Prince had no money, and that he expected no reinforcements, their ardour suddenly cooled; and, finding the impossibility of keeping an army together, he was fain to return to Acre.

The position of Edward was now mortifying, but he was not without a consolation. Fortunately, enough had been done to gratify the pride of Englishmen, and to teach foreigners to speak of English warriors with respect. He knew well that when, slowly but surely, tidings reached London of Acre having been relieved, Nazareth retaken, the castle of the Pilgrims and the castle of St. George recovered, and the battle of Kakhaw won against fearful odds, royalists and supporters of oligarchy would shake hands, and pledge each other in a health to "Sire Edward," and breathe a prayer that the brave Prince might soon be restored to the land of which he was the pride and the hope.

Edward might well be gratified with the result of his achievements. With three hundred valiant men from England, he had changed the aspect of affairs. Bibars Bendocdar had retreated to Egypt, as had been his wont after a campaign, but not, as on former occasions, to recruit and return. In fact, the Sultan had met his match, and discovered that no advantage was to be gained in playing the game of carnage with the man who laid Simon de Montfort low.

CHAPTER IX.

HENRY OF CORNWALL.

ONE day, while Edward was at Acre and walking in the gallery of the palace, a messenger arrived from Italy; and, with a grave countenance, presented a letter. On perusing this, the Prince started, shuddered, and appeared struck with surprise and horror. The letter, which was written by the King of Sicily, bore date the 13th of March, 1271; and its contents were such as might well make Edward's heart beat and his lip quiver.

At Viterbo, a papal city about twenty-five miles from Rome, the cardinals, wearing their scarlet robes, had, in the spring of 1271, assembled to choose a successor to the Sixth Clement; when thither, trusting to influence the election, went Philip, the young King of France, and his uncle, Charles of Anjou. At the same time, in the company of his kinsmen, but probably not sympathising with their object, appeared Henry of Cornwall, then in his thirty-sixth year, and in the full vigour of manhood.

Henry, who was heir of Richard, King of the

Romans, and some years older than Prince Edward, had fought in the Barons' War, yielded himself to Montfort, after Lewes, and resided for some time, in gentle captivity, at the castle of Kenilworth. By his aunt, the Countess of Leicester, and two of her sons, Guy and Simon de Montfort, the heir of Cornwall had been treated with kindness. With young Guy, especially, he had been on terms of intimacy.* The cousins hunted together, hawked together, and indulged in the recreations fashionable at the period; and, as Henry and his sire were prisoners at the time of Evesham, they had no share in the overthrow of Montfort's power.

But Edward's victory at Evesham opened up a new scene; and when Henry the Third was restored by his son to the throne of his fathers, the King of the Romans and his heir appeared as supporters of the royal authority. Moreover, when an expedition to the Holy Land was resolved on, the King of the Romans undertook the guardianship of Edward's son; and Henry of Cornwall accompanied the Prince on the crusade, from which so much was hoped. These very natural circumstances, the Montforts appear to have regarded with a jealous eye; and a tragic catastrophe was the consequence.

* "The only object of real jealousy to the Montforts," says Mrs. Green, "was Prince Edward. They knew his character well; and his captivity appears to have been far more rigorous than that of his royal relations."—*Princesses of England*.

It happened that while Edward was passing the winter of 1270 in Sicily, circumstances led him to distrust the King of France, and to feel some suspicions as to the intentions of the Earl of Gloucester. Such being the case, he deemed it prudent to send the heir of Cornwall to Gascony, that Henry might watch over the safety of that province, and, at the same time, keep an eye on the affairs of England. Accompanying the Kings of France and Sicily to Viterbo, and becoming interested in the deliberations of the cardinals, Henry yielded to curiosity and lingered in the city to witness the ceremony of an election. His stay was to cost him dear.

During the week that Henry of Cornwall was loitering about Viterbo, Guy and Simon de Montfort, bent on mischief, appeared in the city. In England, where these young noblemen had so recently domineered, they had no chance of a home. After Evesham, Edward had obtained the King's pardon for the Countess of Leicester, but declined to say one word for her sons. The young Montforts, therefore, finding themselves banished men, and, brooding over misfortunes, forgot the exact cause of quarrel, and believed themselves injured parties. Moreover, Simon had just returned from a stolen visit to his father's tomb in England burning for vengeance. When men are in this state of mind, it is marvellous what deeds they can contemplate without horror. Understanding that Henry was in the

city, he resolved on an assassination, and induced Guy to take part in the project.

Utterly unaware of the hostility felt towards him by his cousins, Henry of Cornwall, on the morning of the 13th of March, went to mass at the church of St. Lawrence ; and, having for days been dogged from place to place, he was observed to enter the sacred edifice. Immediately the church was surrounded by the Montforts and their adherents ; and, while Guy kept watch at the door to prevent his kinsman's escape, Simon, suppressing all scruples of conscience, entered the building bent on murder.

When the heir of Cornwall was at his prayers before the high altar, he heard a well-known voice exclaim : " Henry, traitor, thou shalt not escape ! " and looking round he saw his cousin Simon, completely armed and brandishing a sword. Utterly defenceless, and alarmed, as he well might be, Henry clung to the altar ; and two priests rushed between the assassin and his destined victim. But Simon, who appears to have inherited his sire's nature as his name, regardless of everything but a craving for revenge, stabbed his kinsman to the heart, and is said to have even slain the priests, who attempted to stay his hand. Having perpetrated this crime, the assassin called in his friends to view the bleeding body of his kinsman ; and the Montforts, after dragging the corpse to the door of the church, and exhibiting it to the multitude, mounted their horses

and rode off to take refuge with the Count of Aldobrandini, whose daughter Guy had espoused.

The assassination of Henry of Cornwall excited the utmost horror at Viterbo; and some attempts were made to prevent the escape of the murderers. Neither the King of France, nor the King of Sicily, however, exerted themselves very vigorously; and grave suspicions were, not without cause, entertained that the Montforts had been instruments of personages much more important than themselves.

Henry's mortal remains were brought to England. His heart was interred in a gold cup, near St. Edward's shrine, at Westminster, and his body in the abbey which his father had founded at Hayles. Sorrowing over the death of his heir, and refusing to be comforted, the King of the Romans pined away; and, in the spring of 1272, he was laid by the side of his son. At Viterbo, the memory of Henry of Cornwall was long preserved by a painting of his death on the wall of the church of St. Lawrence.

CHAPTER X.

THE PRINCE AND THE ASSASSIN.

ACRE having been relieved, Nazareth recaptured, and Kakhaw won, Edward's fame spread over the East; and Albaga, King of the Tartars, sent ambassadors with letters expressing his high admiration of the English Prince, and offering to despatch Cenabar, a great Tartar warrior, to aid the crusaders against their Mameluke foe. Edward treated the proposal with favour, and began to dream of mighty conquests made by him at the head of an army composed of Christians and Tartars; but circumstances proved altogether unfavourable to his grand designs, or to farther operations.

In fact, selfishness and the climate had done for Bibars Bendocdar what the potent Sultan could not have done for himself. Freed from pressing danger, and discovering that Edward had no money, the Syrian Christians became lukewarm in their alliance; and, parched by the Syrian sun, the crusaders from Europe found themselves unfitted for exertion. All

the English suffered from the excessive heat; many of them fell victims to a too-free indulgence in the fruit of the country; and, ere long, the Prince was stretched on a bed of sickness. While Edward lay prostrate in the palace of Acre, and lamented bitterly the murder of Henry of Cornwall, and cursed the treachery that had enabled the murderers of his kinsman to escape, the knife of the assassin was stealthily approaching his own brave and generous heart.

Among the Eastern magnates who obeyed the word of Bibars Bendocdar, the Emir of Joppa was one of the most conspicuous. This Emir, who exercised great influence, expressed a high admiration of Edward's valour, and, pretending a strong desire to be converted to Christianity, opened communications with the Prince through an assassin, named Anzazim, and known as "the Old Man of the Mountains."* As the Emir's messages were strictly secret, the Prince's chamber was cleared whenever his agent demanded an interview; and Anzazim came and went so frequently with letters and messages, that at length everything like suspicion was lulled to sleep.

On one occasion—it was the evening of Friday in

* "This man," says M. Paris, "had been educated in subterranean places from boyhood, where he had been taught to make a sudden attack on any prince of the adversaries of his sect, and had been given to understand, that even if he should be slain in his attempt, he would, for such an action, receive now life among the joys of Paradise."

Whitsun week—Edward, attired in a white vest, was reeling on his couch, and resting his head against a window in deep thought. The scene before him was fair to behold. The sky appeared richly coloured; the setting sun painted the landscape in gorgeous hues; the breeze sighed among the palm-trees and lofty sycamores; and the waters of the Mediterranean murmured on the Syrian shore. But the Prince's heart and his fancy were in all probability far away. He was thinking, perhaps with sadness, of the oaken forests of England, through whose glades he had hunted the stag, and of the fair fields over which he had been in the habit of flying his white Norwegian hawk.

While Edward mused, and the hour of vespers approached, Anzazim appeared at the palace and demanded an audience. The Prince's attendants forthwith left the chamber; and "the Old Man of the Mountains," after making his usual salaam at the door, entered, and kneeling with profound submission, presented a letter. While Edward was occupied with the perusal, Anzazim, pretending to have another letter, put his hand in his bosom as if to produce it. Instead, however, he drew forth a dagger, and made a thrust at Edward's side. The Prince was in the utmost peril; but his keen eye was on the assassin in an instant; and, quick as thought, he raised his arm and warded off the blow. Utterly desperate, the "Old Man" made a second attempt. Springing up at a bound, Edward wrenched the dagger from his

hand, and exclaiming "Base traitor," laid him lifeless on the floor.

Meanwhile the noise of a scuffle reached the ears of Edward's household; and, in alarm, the officers in attendance rushed in to ascertain the cause. Seeing Anzazim on the floor, and Edward pale with rage, the Prince's harper, guessing the whole, seized a stool, and beat out the assassin's brains. But the Prince reproved the harper with indignation. "Why," he asked indignantly, "do you strike a man who is dead?"

News of Edward's mishap quickly reached the court of the palace and flew into the city; and great was the alarm caused thereby. Everybody was seized with apprehension; and all wrung their hands. But the master of the Templars said, "The wound must be looked to, for doubtless the weapon would be poisoned;" and having procured a potion, which, it was believed, would prevent poison from taking effect, he hurried to the Prince. "I forewarned you that the man meditated treachery," said the Grand Master, as he entered Edward's chamber. "However, be of good cheer. Take this potion; and all will end well."

Surgeons having been sent for, the wound was dressed; and hopes of a speedy recovery were entertained. But when a few days passed over, gloom appeared on the faces of the English crusaders; and much alarm was excited in Acre by a rumour that

the wound was growing black and showing signs of mortification. On observing this, the surgeons, though little guessing the value of the life with which they were dealing, manifested dismay, and conversed in so low a tone, as not only to alarm the Princess, who was present, but even to attract the attention of the mighty patient.

"Assuredly," they whispered one to another, "the dagger has been smeared with poison."

"Why do you whisper among yourselves?" asked Edward, turning on his uneasy couch. "Tell me the truth, and fear not. Can I not be cured?"

One of the physicians stepped forward. He was an Englishman and celebrated for his skill.

"Sire Edward," he answered, "you can be cured. But, in that case, it will be necessary for you to undergo acute suffering."

"And if I suffer," asked Edward, "do you promise me restoration to health?"

"I promise it," said the English physician; "and I would hazard my head on the cure."

"Then," said Edward, "I commit my body to your hands. Do with me whatever you will."

At this time, Eleanor of Castille, then about twenty-seven, stood by Edward's couch; and, horrified at the pain which was to be inflicted on her husband, the Princess gave way to grief and burst into tears. But the physician, feeling that he could not operate in her presence, and moreover that it

was no time for ceremony, insisted that she should leave the chamber, and requested Edmund Crouchback and John de Vesci to lead her out.

"I will not go," exclaimed Eleanor, weeping; "I will not leave my husband at such a moment."

"Madam," said de Vesci, removing the Princess, but with chivalrous respect, "be contented—it is better that one woman should shed tears, for a little while, than that all England should lament for a great season."

When the chamber was cleared, the English surgeon set to work; and, having nerve and skill, he performed the operation with complete success. "Now, Sire," said he, "take comfort; for I prophesy that in a fortnight you will be able to mount your horse." The prediction of the English surgeon appeared unlikely to be fulfilled; but his skill excited general admiration.*

* "The vulgar story," says Tyrrell, "of Eleanor sucking the venom out of her husband's wound, is a mere romance; this action of hers not being mentioned in any ancient author of, or near, the time: the first in which I can find it being Mr. Camden in his '*Britannia*,' from whom it is also transcribed by Mr. Speede in his *Chronicle*; and both of them cite Rodericus Toletanus, or Roderick, Archbishop of Toledo, for it. But though I have diligently searched that author's history of Spain, yet I cannot find it there, nor I believe anybody else; for, at the end of his work, he tells the reader that he finished it A.D. 1243, which was ten years before Prince Edward married the Princess of Castille, and near twenty before the accident of the assassin's wounding that prince."—*History of England*.

When Edward's wound began to heal, the Christians in Acre expressed their anxiety to march against the Saracens and avenge the attempt at assassination. But Edward, turning on his couch, said, "In the name of the Lord, I prohibit all from molesting the pagans at this time. Know you not that many of my nation have gone, in small companies, on pilgrimages to the Sepulchre; and if we give the pagans even the smallest annoyance, my countrymen will all be slain?"

Meanwhile Bibars Bendocdar, hearing of Edward's wound, sent several of his chief men to express his regret at what had occurred, and to call God to witness that he had no knowledge whatever of the treachery. On coming into Edward's presence, the Sultan's ambassadors fell on their faces. "What," exclaimed the Prince in English, "is the use of paying this reverence to me, whom of all men you most bitterly hate?"

It appears that Edward fully acquitted Bibars Bendocdar; indeed, his suspicions were turned in a different direction. He had reason to fear that the same influence which led to the assassination of Henry of Cornwall in the church of St. Lawrence, was exercised to point the knife of Anzazim at his own heart. But the instigators of the crime, whoever they might have been, were disappointed, and, within fifteen days of the operation, the English surgeon had the gratification of seeing the Prince mount his steed.

CHAPTER XI.

EDWARD'S RETURN.

EDWARD was recovering from his wound, and the ambassadors of Bibars Bendoedar were hastening back to their master, when "some Preacher and Minorite brethren," reached Acre, and made their way to the residence of Theobald, Archdeacon of Liege. The intelligence brought by these holy men was such as to secure them an early audience. In fact, they had come from Viterbo with news that the cardinals had elected Theobald to the papal dignity. All Acre was excited by this event; and the Syrian Christians delighted their minds with the idea, that the elevation of the legate to the chair of St. Peter, would lead to a mighty effort for the deliverance of Jerusalem from the Infidels.

Theobald was hardly less sanguine than his neighbours, and, with high resolutions, prepared to sail for Italy. Before embarking, however, he assured the Christians of Syria, that he would exert all his influence on their behalf; and in a discourse, addressed

to a large assembly, took for his text: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may I myself be forgotten among men!" Having given this solemn pledge, Theobald departed to ascend the papal throne with the title of Gregory the Tenth.

Meanwhile Edward began to think seriously of England. He could now entertain little hope of accomplishing anything of consequence in the East; and he had received from his aged father letters urging his immediate return. After doing all in his power to strengthen Acre, the Prince became anxious to see a peace negotiated, and the King of Cyprus and Jerusalem concluded a treaty with Bibars Bendor. By this treaty it was agreed that the Christians should peacefully hold Acre, and a certain extent of territory in the vicinity of the city; and the English Prince, albeit not much relishing the conditions, was fain to consent. Matters having thus been arranged, Edward, with the Princess, and their infant daughter, Joan of Acre, prepared to return to England, for which his brother Edmund, and several of his companions, had already set out.*

After sailing from Syria, where he left a reputation inferior to no man who had ever borne the cross, Edward, on the 15th of August, 1272, landed

* "This year, some nobles of Ireland, especially one great noble, Thomas de Clare, who brought with him four Saracens prisoner, returned from the Holy Land to England."—*Matthew of Westminster*.

at Trapani, in Sicily. At that place, he received pressing invitation from his old tutor to visit Rome, and crossed the Faro, a narrow strait that separates Sicily from Calabria. At a mountain village of Calabria, Edward, who had already received intelligence of the death of his son, Prince John, was informed that, in December, 1271, his father, King Henry, had died at Westminster. On hearing this, Edward was so much affected, that Charles of Anjou, who knew nothing of tenderness but the name, expressed his extreme surprise.

"Cousin," said Charles roughly, "I cannot but marvel, that you grieve so much more for your aged father, than you did for your young son."

"The loss of a son," said Edward, "is a calamity which, with God's blessing, I may live to repair; but the loss of a father is irreparable."

Proceeding on his way, Edward, in the month February, 1273, reached Rome, and remained for several days in "the Eternal City." Finding, however, that the Pope was absent at Civita Vecchia, about forty miles from Rome, he turned towards that town, and was there received by Gregory with high honours. After being treated by his host with the utmost consideration, and warned to beware of the machinations of his foes, Edward left Civita Vecchia, and pursued his journey through Italy.

Never had the presence of a crusader in Europe excited so much admiration or elicited so much ap-

plause. Edward's fame as a champion of the cross had preceded him ; and, in every city, the inhabitants came forth to do him honour. By the Milanese, especially, he was received with enthusiasm ; and they forced on his acceptance rich presents of horses and purple mantles. After crossing the Alps, he met a deputation from England, who formally announced his accession ; and then he paid a visit of ceremony to Philip of France.

From Paris Edward proceeded to Aquitaine to settle the affairs of that province, and knowing that all was quiet in England, remained on the Continent, hoping to fathom the projects of the French King, whom he distrusted. This nearly cost him dear, and proved too plainly that the Pope, in warning Edward to beware of his foes, was animated by no groundless suspicions.

The summer of 1274 had set in, and Edward was still lingering on the Continent, when, to his surprise, he received a challenge from the Count of Chalons. The Count, distinguished as a warrior, pretended great eagerness to break a lance with a champion who had filled the East with his renown ; and Edward, with little hesitation, accepted this challenge to the listed plain. Each was to be accompanied by a thousand men, and preparations were forthwith made for the grand encounter.

At the time and place appointed, Edward, with a heart as fearless as the lion on his shield, appeared

in the lists, attended by a thousand warriors and bestriding one of those war-steeds celebrated in minstrels' song. Soon after the challenger appeared, but, to Edward's surprise, with double the followers agreed on. Suspensions of foul play immediately pervaded the English ranks, and were soon confirmed by a furious assault.

A fierce conflict now took place; and the Count of Chalons, a champion of great physical prowess, threw his brawny arms around Edward's neck; and made a desperate effort to drag the English King to the ground. But the Count soon found that he had mistaken his man. Not only did Edward sit firm as a rock, but, giving his charger the spur, he lifted the Count from his saddle, and hurled the bulky warrior headlong to the ground. The Count's knights spurred in to the rescue; but the Count, bruised and terrified, cried for quarter, and offered to surrender his sword. With a look of disdain, Edward turned away, and ordered an English soldier to receive the weapon. Meanwhile, the English bowmen had driven the Count's infantry from the field; and brought the struggle to a termination little anticipated by their assailants.

After this conflict, which was long remembered as "the little war of Chalons," Edward turned his steps homeward; and, landing at Dover on the 2nd of August, he prepared to enter London. Never before had the English capital presented an aspect so gay.

Wine flowed without stint, the streets were hung with silken cloths, arras, and tapestry, and the municipal functionaries manifested their enthusiasm by throwing handfuls of gold and silver from the windows. As Edward and his fair spouse entered the city, the streets rang with cheers; and not until they had disappeared within the Palace of Westminster did the populace cease from displaying their enthusiasm. Nor was this popularity evanescent. Ere long Simon de Montfort was quite forgotten by his former idolaters; and all caps were in the air for "the good King Edward." After a reign of thirty-five years, Edward was still the hero of Englishmen; and when he expired at Burgh-on-the-Sands, his death was bewailed by the whole nation.

CHAPTER XII.

MAMELUKE SULTANS.

THE English chivalry having disappeared from Syria, and the last of the great crusaders having had the Confessor's crown placed on his brow in the abbey of Westminster, Bibars Bendoedar resumed his career of conquest in the East.

The Sultan was no longer restrained by fear of arrivals from Europe. After Edward's crusade, every attempt to rouse the old spirit proved abortive; and the condition of the kingdom of Jerusalem was by no means enviable. Acre, indeed, was comparatively secure: for, even in the event of the Sultan disregarding the treaty of 1272, the walls had been fortified by Edward with such care, that the city was in a condition to stand a siege. Other places, however, were less fortunate; and when Bibars resumed operations, the Christians were much inclined to cry, as they had done before Edward's arrival—"O, Mussulmans, spare us! spare us!"*

* "In a word," says Fuller, "his (Edward's) coming to Ptolemais and assisting them there, was like a cordial given to a

All this time the Christians in the East conducted themselves in such a way as could hardly fail ultimately to render the remnant of their kingdom an easy conquest. Even the succession to the sovereignty of Jerusalem was a matter of dispute. The King of Cyprus and the King of Sicily were both pretenders to the crown; and the adherents of each were foolish enough to fight about the claim to a kingdom that could no longer be said to exist.

It happened, however, that while the Syrian Christians were by their discord playing the Sultan's game, their formidable foe did not sit easily on his throne or in his saddle. In fact, Bibars Bendoedar, having sacrificed two sultans to his ambitious projects, had ever been in dread of some Mameluke chief proving as unscrupulous as himself, and following the course which had conducted him to power. His temper, naturally jealous, became with years so much so, that the simplest circumstance was sufficient to excite his suspicions, and the most trifling communication between neighbours was concluded to be a conspiracy.

At length, while engaged in war with Albaga, King of the Tartars, Bibars ordered enormous imposts to be levied. Deep discontent was the consequence; the death of the Sultan was earnestly prayed for, as

dying man, which doth piece out his life (or death rather) a few groans and as many gasps the longer."

the most desirable of events; and hardly had the levy of the tribute commenced, when Bibars Bendoedar, after reigning seventeen years, was numbered with the dead.

The cause of the great Sultan's death has been variously stated. One says that he expired from the effects of a wound received in Armenia; another, that he died of cold caught while swimming the Euphrates; and a third, that he was poisoned. But, however that might have been, his name inspired awe and dread even after life had departed; and men trembled around the litter that bore his corpse from Damascus to Cairo. His fame was of high account in the East; and he could boast that, except showing the white feather in presence of "our Edward," he never retreated before the face of an enemy, nor sought to divest himself of the odium of a crime.

When Bibars was carried off by death, his son was placed on the throne of Cairo. But a revolution, excited by the Mamelukes, soon after occurred; and Kelaoun, the bravest of the emirs, was invested with sovereign authority.

The new Sultan vowed to complete the work which his predecessor had begun; and the Christian states were threatened with speedy ruin. At feud with each other, and indifferent as to the fate of their neighbours, the Christians formed no plan of defence. Castle after castle, and fortress after fortress, fell into the Sultan's hands; and Tripoli having, after a siege

of more than a month, surrendered, was consigned to the flames.

Aere, after the fall of Tripoli, stood almost alone to bear the brunt of the battle ; and the Sultan not only occupied himself with schemes for its destruction, but appeared in a menacing attitude at the gates. But, brave as he was, and flushed with victory, Kelaoun hesitated to push matters to a crisis, and entertained so serious a dread of the warriors of the West, that he consented to a truce for two years.

Scarcely had Kelaoun led his turbaned warriors from the walls of Aere, when the vicious propensities of the wife of a rich citizen led to outrages that gave the Sultan a pretext for renewing the war. It appears that this lady had so far forgotten herself, as to become enamoured of a young Saracen ; and, in defiance of prudence and propriety, indulged him with meetings in one of the gardens surrounding the city. The husband, however, became aware of what was taking place, and, in his anger, swore to be avenged. Summoning a few of his friends, therefore, he walked out of the gates, entered the gardens, surprised the amorous pair, and sacrificed both to his outraged honour. The shrieks of the lady attracted to the spot some Saracens, who endeavoured to avenge their countryman. Swords were drawn, a scuffle ensued, and the Christians, being superior in number, soon laid every Moslem dead on the ground,

News of this bloodshed was carried to Cairo.

The Sultan was not of course the man to tolerate such proceedings, and he instantly demanded full satisfaction. The Christians of Acre, divided in opinion, and reluctant to gratify the Sultan, despatched ambassadors to Cairo to offer, not satisfaction, but excuses and presents. Kelaoun, after listening to the excuses and rejecting the presents with contempt, sent back the ambassadors to Acre with a threat that the Christians should feel the full weight of his anger.

The ambassadors returned to Acre to render an account of their mission; and Kelaoun prepared to execute his threats. At his word, the signal for war went through all his provinces; and, from the Nile to the Euphrates, the Moslems were soon in motion.

But even sultans are mortal, and Kelaoun was not destined to live to annihilate the Christian state. When about to set forth on his enterprise, he was attacked by sickness, and soon became aware that his end was approaching. More fortunate in his offspring than Nouredin, or Saladin, or Bibars Bendocdar, Kelaoun had a son, Chalil, who was quite capable of grasping the sceptre. Ere closing his eyes, Kelaoun summoned his son, and conjured him, in presence of the emirs, to pursue, without intermission, the war against the Christians.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CITY OF REFUGE.

WHILE Kelaoun was yielding up his breath at Cairo, and Chalil was promising to execute his father's dying command, and imans were imprecating the curses of Mahomet on the Christians of the East, Acre, warned of the impending peril, was astir and preparing.

The inhabitants of Acre were not without encouragement, so far as the sovereigns of Christendom were concerned, to present a brave front to the gathering foe. Henry de Lusignan, King of Cyprus, landed with hundreds of warriors to fight for the remnants of that kingdom which he claimed; John de Gresli came from France to represent Philip the Fair; and from England, Otho de Grandison, who had accompanied the great Edward in the last crusade, arrived to intimate that, whenever the Conqueror of Evesham could be spared from Europe, he would come to defend the city which he had formerly saved.

On hearing of Kelaoun's death, the Christians indulged in vague hopes of the danger passing over.

But, about the beginning of April, 1291, their delusions on this point were dispelled by the appearance of Chalil on that plain which, a century earlier, had been occupied by Saladin. The army of the young Sultan presented a most formidable aspect. Two hundred thousand men, sixty thousand of whom were mounted, ranged themselves around the Sultan's banner; and, covering several leagues of ground, extended from Mount Carmel to the sea. With them came three hundred machines of war, one of which was so large that a hundred chariots were scarcely sufficient for its transportation.

After the Grand Master of the Temple had made an ineffectual attempt to negotiate, and been accused of "treachery" for so doing, the Sultan roused the ardour of his soldiers; and, despatching his emirs to possess themselves of Tyre, Sidon, and the other Christian cities, he prepared to commence the siege of Acre. The inhabitants at first exhibited high courage, and arranged themselves in four divisions. One of these was commanded by the Grand Master of the Templars; another by the Grand Master of the Hospital; a third, consisting of Englishmen and Frenchmen, was commanded by Otho de Grandison and John de Gresli; and a fourth, composed of the fighting men of Syria and the warriors from the isles of the Mediterranean, by the King of Cyprus. Each of these divisions was charged with the defence of certain towers and ramparts: the King of Cyprus

taking his post at the tower and gate of St. Anthony, on the east of the city.

The siege at length commenced; and the Moslem warriors, fighting under the Sultan's eye, pursued the operations with incredible vigour, while the Christians conducted the defence in such a way as to inflict much loss on their assailants. The machines of the besiegers not only hurled fire-pots and leaden balls, but huge stones, which, when they fell, shook palaces and houses to their foundations; but the Christians retaliated with a vigour which cost many thousands of the besiegers their lives, and caused the Sultan grave doubts as to the issue of the conflict. United by a feeling of common danger, and not without hope of aid from Europe, the besieged hurled arrows, darts, and stones with destructive effect from the walls; and, ever and anon, made sorties with such skill and courage, as to carry carnage and confusion into the ranks of their adversaries.

The success of these adventurous sallies inspired the crusaders with a dangerous degree of temerity; and, on one occasion, carried away by enthusiasm, they penetrated into the Saracen camp. The exploit was fatal in its results. While some were repulsed with slaughter, others, encompassed by countless foes, were cut down; and the Moslem cavalry, fastening the heads of the slain round the necks of their horses, went to exhibit them to the Sultan as trophies of victory.

But though, at first, the crusaders fought with the utmost ardour, their zeal, as weeks passed, began to cool. Their courage was exhausted by fatigue; their numbers rapidly diminished; the struggle gradually became more hopeless; and the attacks of the besiegers grew more frequent. Many, under such circumstances, began to despair; and, discouraging each other by sinister predictions, exhibited anxiety to leave a city which they could not defend. The quay was daily crowded with numbers eager to depart; and, to the evil of desertion, was added dissension among those in authority. There was no leader sufficiently elevated by genius and renown above the others to command general obedience, and there was only one man in Europe whose presence could have changed the fate of the East. At that time the King of England was too busily occupied with the consolidation of the empire of the Bretwaldas to reconquer the kingdom of the Baldwins; and every day brought the last refuge of the Christians of the East nearer its catastrophe.

The Sultan, having been a month before Acre, became impatient of further delay. He therefore announced his will that the city should be taken by storm; and, on the 1st of May, the signal was given for an assault. At daybreak the drums of the Saracens, placed on three hundred camels, sent forth a deafening sound; the most formidable of those machines of war which had been brought from Cairo

moved forward to batter the ramparts of St. Anthony; and the Moslem soldiers, planting ladders at the base of the walls, commenced the attack with the spirit of men resolute to conquer or die.

At this point the King of Cyprus commanded, and had the advantage of heading soldiers who recognised his authority. For the whole of that day he conducted the defence so gallantly, that the Saracens were kept at bay; and, when night suspended operations, they retreated without having gained any advantage. Nevertheless, the King began to think more of saving himself and his army than the city, and resolved on getting away. Retiring in the evening, under pretext of taking repose, he promised to resume his post at daybreak; but, meanwhile, he embarked with all his soldiers, ordered his sails to be hoisted, and steered towards his insular dominion.

When morning dawned, and the desertion of the King of Cyprus became known, the crusaders loudly expressed their indignation. The Saracens, becoming aware of the circumstance, redoubled their exertions, and battered the walls with rams till a breach was made. A fearful conflict now took place: Christian and Saracen fighting hand to hand, and steel to steel. No quarter was asked or given; on all sides scenes of valour and despair were enacted; and when night closed over the city, two thousand crusaders had been added to the previous carnage.

Nevertheless, the Sultan felt as if the prize were

about to elude his grasp. Aere appeared not one eity, but a number of eities within one wall, all of which were defended by their inhabitants; and these, having been once more addressed by the Patriareh, were girding themselves up for a desperate effort. Moreover, the Templars and Knights of St. John were determined to struggle to the last, and were hourly performing prodigies of valour. William de Clermont, marshal of the Knights of St. John, won particular distinetion, presenting himself wherever the danger was greatest, and leading on the Christians to the destruction of their foes. The Sultan, astonished at the obstinaey of the defenee, began to lose hope; but, influeneed by imans and renegades, he held to his purpose; and, while threatening with the severest punishment all who should fly from the face of a Christian, promised high rewards to any one who should plant the standard of the Prophet, not on the walls, but in the heart of the Christian eity.

Having thus endeavoured to profit at once by the hopes and fears of his soldiers, Chalil, on the morning of the 4th of May, gave the signal for a deeisive attack. Led by the Sultan, and animated by his presenee, the Saracens stormed the gate of St. Anthony, now defended by the Templars, and, without regard to the loss they sustained, pushed on the attack with frenzied eourage. The erusaders fought more fiereely than ever; but it was of no avail. The Saracens pursued the attack with an

impetuosity that defied resistance, beat down the ramparts, and rushed into the breach.

The Knights of the Temple were now in despair. Their valour, however, was proof against the peril they had to front. Resolving to attack the enemy's camp, they formed in order, and sallied furiously out with lances in rest. But it was rashly done. Encountered by superior numbers, they were driven back after a sanguinary conflict; and had scarcely reached the ramparts, when the Grand Master, struck with an arrow, fell mortally wounded in the midst of his knights. A few hundreds of warriors now remained to guard the gate; and these fell back before the press of a multitude of foes, fiery with fanaticism and lavish of blood.

The elements seemed to conspire with the Sultan to strike dismay and terror into the hearts of the Christians. As the day advanced, gloom spread over the sky, and gradually deepened into such darkness, that men could hardly distinguish friends from foes. At the same time, a tempest burst with fearful violence on the city, adding to the consternation and confusion.

At this stage, when despair was in every heart, and when the destruction of Acre was inevitable, one man appeared to cherish hope. Rallying some fugitives, and shouting his battle-ery, William de Clermont, marshal of St. John, spurred towards the gate of St. Anthony, which had just been abandoned. With shouts of defiance, and almost alone, he couched

his spear and penetrated several times into the ranks of the Saracens. Returning alive, he rode to the market-place, and seemed bent on new adventures. But his steed, jaded and fatigued, stood still unable to move; and the gallant Marshal, pierced with an arrow, sunk in the heart of the city of which he had been the bravest defender.

The Christians now perceived that the struggle was over; and, animated by the instinct of self-preservation, they crowded to the quay in the hope of escaping. But this was no easy matter. The ships in the port were too few to convey the multitude who rushed to embark; and the sea was so agitated by the storm, that the ships could not approach the shore. The consequence was a scene of unspeakable horrors. Everybody was imploring the aid, which few were in a position to render. Wives were calling on their husbands; mothers on their sons; children on their parents. Many, becoming desperate, threw themselves into the bay, and sunk in attempting to swim to the ships, or yielded to their fate, when beaten off from the sides. Noble ladies, whose brothers and sires had fallen during the siege, appeared on the quay, offering their diamonds and jewels to be saved, and even securing a passage from the sacked city by promising the mariners to become their wives, if carried beyond the reach of the infidels.*

* "It is strange what is reported," says Fuller, "that about five hundred matrons and virgins of noble blood, standing on

The Patriarch of Jerusalem had nobly done his duty during the siege, and appeared to regard calmly the prospect of dying amid the ruins of the city. The friends of the venerable man, however, carried him to the quay and placed him securely in his vessel. Unfortunately, the charity of the Patriarch moved him to receive on board all who implored his protection; and, the vessel sinking under its load, all on board found a watery grave. While this was occurring, the Sultan's cavalry, galloping down to the harbour, chased the multitude into the water; and the weapons of the Saracens speedily despatched such of the Christians as hesitated to trust themselves to the waves of the sea.

By this time, the conflict was deluging every street with blood. The Christian warriors disputed the ground foot by foot; and, on all sides, corpses lay in heaps. At every church, palace, and public edifice the crusaders made a stand; and when they saw these places taken, one after another, by the Saracens and given to the flames, they threw themselves, with desperate intent, into the castle of the Templars.

the shore, and having all their richest jewels with them, cried out with lamentable voice, and proffered to any mariner that would undertake safely to land them anywhere, all their wealth for his hire, and also that he should choose any one of them for his wife. Then a certain mariner came, and transporting them all freely, safely landed them in Cyprus; nor by any inquiry could it be known, when he was sought for to receive his hire, who this mariner was, nor whither he went."

On learning the situation of the warriors who had escaped the swords of his soldiers, the Sultan caused the castle of the Templars to be besieged; and soldiers, instructed to put all within to the sword, surrounded the stronghold. For several days, the knights maintained themselves with desperate valour; and, driven to the tower of the Grand Master, attempted to resist their fate. But the tower, having been undermined, was utterly insecure, and, while the Saracens were mounting to an assault, the structure gave way with a fearful crash. The Christian knights, their Moslem assailants, and many women and children, who had there sought an asylum, all perished beneath the ruins.

The long struggle was now at an end; and Acre in the hands of the Sultan. Destruction, however, was the policy of the Saracens in regard to all that the Christians had reared. Churches, towers, and ramparts, were demolished; palaces and public edifices were given to the flames; and everything was destroyed, likely to again attract the warriors of the West to the coast of Syria.





